

Peeling back the layers of Latino politics

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Environment:
Advocates at
odds over tactics

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Talking Points

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Southern Exposure

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A Complex Issue

In the ebb and flow of politics, the tide seems to be rolling in these days for environmentalists. It was a long time coming, they say. While the vast majority of Californians were making up their minds that, yes, indeed, they would like to see nature protected, environmental activists in the Capitol endured long, dry spells during which they were on the outs, politically speaking, with the powers that be.

Last year, voters altered that balance of power in a big way. Yet, as *California Journal* contributor Max Vanzi discovered in dozens of interviews he conducted for our cover story, many environmentalists still don't see eye-to-eye on how best to reach their goals. Some caution against dissent, others against getting cocky. Many warn that it's unwise to view their community as a monolithic whole.

It's worth noting the same cautionary tale surfaced when *CJ* Associate Editor Anthony York set out to tell the story of the complexity and depth of this state's Latino politics. The bottom line? Take nothing for granted in California politics, least of all the simplest scenarios.

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By Anthony York



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Photo by Rich Pedroncelli

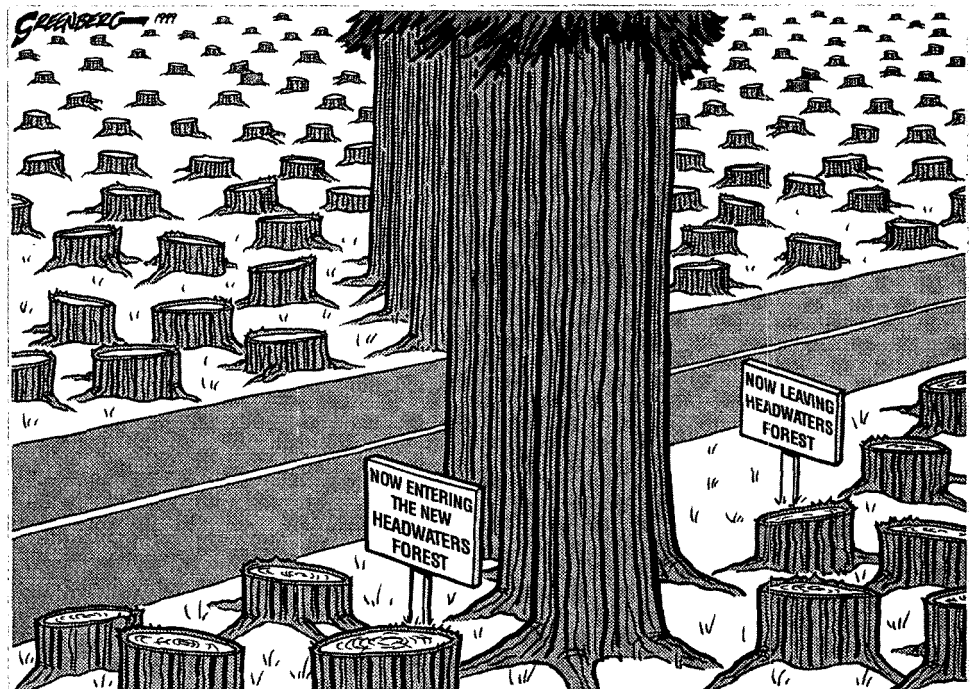
Meat and potatoes politics.

With all the issues and candidates that routinely face the electorate, more than a few pundits have suggested that voting is no picnic. But don't tell that to voters in the 16th Assembly District. A few fortunate registered voters in the recently completed special election to fill the seat received just that — a picnic — courtesy of the Democratic Party. Voters who received a special party mailing were directed to several area churches where, upon presenting the letter and their voting receipt, they were given a coupon for a free whole chicken and a tub of potato salad. Such food giveaways have become a staple of the party's get-out-the-vote efforts in off-year and special elections. The most infamous of these gimmicks was a donut giveaway in a 1987 state Senate special election which was credited with helping the late Senator Cecil Green to a narrow victory. Why no such giveaways in regular elections? Well, it seems state and federal law differ on the subject. The feds say no giveaways of any type, so any election that involves federal offices can't use the trick. But in off-year elections, state law applies, and state law says they're okay, as long as they are not tied to a particular vote for a particular candidate or issue. Still, the Green Party candidate has filed a complaint about the giveaway to the Fair Political Practices Commission.

No friends at home. Yet another name has been added to the GOP's enemies list: Orange County GOP political consultant Eileen

Padberg. Republicans. Over the years, Padberg has been highly critical of the all-male hierarchy that dominates Orange County Republican politics. As a consultant, she has run primary campaigns against, for instance, former Representative Bob Dornan. Attorney General Bill Lockyer (who never misses a chance to stick a finger in the eye of the O.C. "Mafia") recently named Padberg to the bipartisan McPherson Commission, which is assessing the 1974 Political Reform Act. "She calls herself a Republican but she's spent years criticizing the Republican Party," fellow Orange County Republican Matt Cunningham complained to the *Orange County Register*. Padberg's criticism? Well, she didn't like the fact that party leaders regularly rallied around Dornan long after he became an embarrassment. And she didn't like the fact that party poobahs anointed candidates — males all — to run for various vacancies. And she didn't much like the fact that party leaders turned a blind eye to an array of shenanigans in the wake of the recall effort against former Assembly Speaker Doris Allen (R-Cypress). Well-placed criticism, we might add.

Good humor man. Ever have somebody do something that seems cryptic or odd at the time, only to figure out later what it was all about? Such an instance occurred early in the recent five-hour meeting of the Assembly Republican Caucus. The 32 Assembly Republicans had gathered to decide whether to dump their leader, Rod Pacheco. Pacheco, it seems, had exercised the



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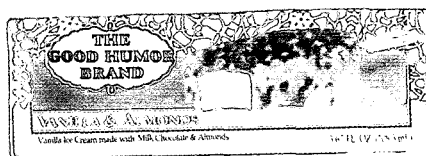
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bad judgement of comparing three of his GOP colleagues with a certain film comedy trio whose name ends in "Stooges." He compounded the bad judgment by making that comparison in



the presence of a *New York Times* reporter. While Republicans were holed up in the Assembly's Rules Committee room raking Pacheco over the coals, Democrats were holding their own caucus across the hall in the Assembly Lounge. As the Dems emerged from their meeting, several were munching on Hagen-Dazs ice cream bars courtesy, they said, of Assemblyman Roy Ashburn, Pacheco's leadership rival. Seems strange. But when you learn that, going into the meeting Ashburn thought he had the votes, the gesture makes sense ... a cocky little calling card from the new boss on the GOP side. Unfortunately for Ashburn, his ability to count the number of Democrats needing ice cream was better than his ability to count the number of Republicans lined up in his corner. By the time the grueling five-hour meeting was over, Pacheco was still the boss. Maybe next time, he'll give something to colleagues who actually have a vote in his caucus.

Spelling test. It's hard to find anyone whose name hasn't been misspelled or misread in some form or another, even if the name is John Smith. So you can just imagine what the first day of school was like for Randy Jurado Ertll, the official spokesman for the California League of Conservation Voters. Some teachers probably didn't even make an attempt. Yet even Ertll must have been scratching his head when he saw himself identified in the *Lynwood Press* newspaper this past January as "Randy Guard Earth." Welcome, Randy, to the age of spell check. It seems the copy editor relied a little too heavily

on his or her computer cohort, blithely clicking "replace" instead of "skip." The CLCV staff ran the name through their own spell check

and, sure enough, Randy was once again guarding the Earth. Of course, if you have to have your name misshapen, it helps to

have it misshapen in a contextually appropriate way. After all, isn't guarding the Earth what environmental groups are about? But lest Randy believe fate is too close an ally, it should be noted that not every spell checker is as generous. When we ran his name through our own spell check, he wound up as "Randy Garret Aortal." Though not quite as poetic, he can still claim to be all heart.

Nowhere man.

There's a new political action committee in San Diego, run by someone who can only be described as an interesting case study. According to papers filed with the Secretary of State's Office, the Liberty Slate has only one officer: its treasurer. One might consider the idea of setting up one's own political action committee as an act of supreme ego, particularly a committee whose official purpose is to "promote Liberty and oppose Tyranny." But a look at the name gives pause: J.R. "Nobody" Graham. That's right. The man who would set himself up as San Diego's sentry against the forces of repression considers himself to be nobody. It's even how he signs his name. So what are liberty-lovers everywhere to make of this? Is Nobody just trying to make a joke? ("Hi, who are you?" "Oh, I'm nobody.") Or is it a case of someone with lofty ideas but low self-esteem? 🏠

"Politics has got so expensive that it takes a lot of money to even get beat with."

— Will Rogers

umbrage

Follow the Money: Is that my phone?

In Congress, as in grammar school, it's important to look and act busy. Onlookers will be impressed. In school, this might nail an A-for-effort. On Capitol Hill, the stakes are higher: Campaign buckaroos.

Take, for example, the case of U.S. House Commerce Committee members, whose walk-up chatter on upcoming telecommunications deliberations perked up the ears of — who else? — bigwigs in the telecommunications industry. This triggered a simple matter of free speech, expressed through five or six figures chasing a dollar sign.

Like, say, \$61,859 for California's U.S. Representative **James E. Rogan**, a Republican from Glendale and, yes, a member of the House Commerce Committee. This generous gift earned Rogan a ranking on the Top Ten recipients of telecommunications PAC & individual contributions in the 1997-98 election cycle. The list was compiled for Capital Eye, a Center for Responsive Politics newsletter that placed Rogan just \$3,220 shy of what House Speaker Dennis Hastert received from the industry.

Rogan — more so than Hastert — is going to need the extra lift. After his role as a House prosecutor of President Bill Clinton, he'll need all the help he can get to hang onto his wobbly Congressional seat.

On the House Commerce Committee, Rogan joins GOP members who vow to stamp their mark on the 1996 law that deregulated the telecommunications industry with the as-yet-unfilled promise of lower

phone and cable rates for consumers. Several are tossing around an idea to spur cable competition by making it easier for satellite providers to enter the market.

Lobbyist Brian Moir told Capital Eye: "Do these lawmakers have a genuine interest to work on the telecom bill or are they merely conducting philosophical discussion and looking engaged to gather additional sources of campaign cash?" Something to think about.

— Cynthia H. Craft



Laughline: Lighten up, will you?

Let's face it, the voting public — and especially the non-voting public — finds modern political gamesmanship a turn-off. It's too rabid, too rigid, too mean, and too wicked. What a downer. What a bummer. Give us something uplifting. Something new. Put a smile on our faces, for gawdsakes.

A mom-and-pop outfit up in Ponderay, Idaho, may have just the ticket: It's an order form, actually. Fill it out and you'll get a shipment of political toys just in time for that 2000 campaign. At www.netw.com/~amptoy, SAL Industries Inc. peddles desktop toys ranging from dancing figures (customizable with the head of your favorite pol) to pull-toys with *Your-slogan!-Your-face!* here. Just think of all the votes (and \$\$\$, too?) a little light creativity can bring.



Even Dan Lungren couldn't blow this one. After all, it worked for Jesse Ventura.

— Cynthia H. Craft

Quotables.....

"I'd love to have a backspace key on my tongue."

— Assembly Minority Leader Rod Pacheco, who got heat for calling three colleagues (fellow GOP Assemblymen Bill Leonard, Bruce Thompson and Roy Ashburn) "the three stooges" in a *New York Times* article.

Excerpts: From the Bookshelf

The invisible line

Bordertown

Barry Gifford & David Perry

Chronicle Books, 1998

The border between the United States and Mexico runs from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific Ocean; from Brownsville, Texas, to San Diego, California, on the U.S. side; from Matamoros, Tamaulipas, to Tijuana, Baja California Norte, on the Mexican side. Half that border is

clearly defined by a geographic barrier—the Rio Grande River, which joins it at El Paso/Ciudad Juarez and flows to the Gulf. The other half shoots a mostly straight line from El Paso/Ciudad Juarez to the Pacific, traveling through the rugged deserts that separate New Mexico from

Chihuahua, Arizona from Sonora, California from Baja.

The 1990s have been marked by the gradual erosion of that border as a state of mind, as those from the south pour into the north in a desperate attempt to escape the grinding poverty of their Latin American homelands. As attention is focused on the wide spaces of borderland where illegals slip through the night to the promise of the United States, too little attention is paid to the bordertowns — on both sides — where dreams are hatched or die, where violence too often is a slice of the daily pastiche, where traffic in human lives is important to the local economy.

Bay Area novelist and screenwriter Barry Gifford and photographer David Perry traveled this invisible line in 1997 and 1998. The result is a provocative visual and prosaic tour of the outposts that often provide the hopeful and courageus with their last look at the familiar face of Mexico and their first raw glimpse of the promised land.

Some of the images are stark and unnerving, especially photographs taken in the aftermath of border violence. Others are, in turn, poignant, gaudy or sad. The text is intensely personal. But both image and prose cast an unsparing eye on the unique world of the bordertown.

— A.G. Block

By the numbers

Rankings:
California NOW's
1998 Legislative
Report Card

106%: Top score given by NOW — to Assemblywoman Shiela Kuehl (D-Santa Monica).

102%: Top score given by NOW to male Assembly members — Wally Knox (D-Los Angeles) and Kevin Murray (D-Los Angeles).

12%: Lowest score in the Assembly, earned by former member Nao Takasugi (R-Oxnard).

16%: Second-lowest score in the Assembly, earned by member Rico Oller (R-San Andreas).

80%: Top score given to Assembly Republicans — earned by Jim Cunneen (R-San Jose) and former member Jim Morrissey (R-Santa Ana).

102%: Top score in the state Senate, won by Dede Alpert (D-San Diego), Hilda Solis (D-El Monte) and Mike Thompson (D-Napa).

20: Number of bills NOW tracked for scoring purposes, counting every vote for or against.

Source: California NOW's 1998 Legislative Report Card, available at www.canow.org

Frank McCulloch: Asking the Questions

Frank McCulloch was a legend in Vietnam. . . He covered Vietnam with great energy and style and courage, and he left the country a deeply disillusioned and disappointed man. . . He came to see what the generals could not see, that it could not be done, that the price was too high.

— David Halberstam
The Powers That Be, 1979

When Frank McCulloch left the Saigon bureau of *Time* magazine in 1966, he may not have known that his already stellar journalistic career was less than half over, that he would go on to become a top editor at two more California dailies, *The Sacramento Bee* (1975-85) and the *San Francisco Examiner* (1985-92) — having already been managing editor of the *Los Angeles Times* in the early 1960s. But in 1966, the tragedy of the Vietnam War — and his belief that he had failed in his efforts to unmask the tragedy in a magazine whose publisher, Henry Luce, was an insistent hawk — had shaken this toughness of journalists to his core.

He returned to the United States, continued to work for *Time-Life* as an editor and bureau chief in Washington, D.C., and New York, then acted on a lifelong interest in education coverage when he founded *Learning* magazine in 1972. Three years later, at 55 and with a journalistic career of awesome proportions already behind him, he took on the McClatchy newspaper dynasty, changing *The Bee*, that stodgy but influential Gray Lady of the West, into a dynamic, award-winning showcase for his first journalistic love, investigative reporting. “Actually,” he told his young reporters, “I’ve never liked the term, ‘investigative reporter.’ All reporters should be good investigators.” It was vintage McCulloch — unpretentious, hard-nosed, direct and wise.

His staff at *The Bee*, many numbered by years of traditional, often uninspired reporting — saturation coverage of the annual Camellia Festival and the State Fair were popular venues for *Bee* reporters when I joined the paper in 1969 — adored him. Thirty years later, it is a measure of the iron loyalty he inspired in his reporting staff, wherever he went, that many of us came to Sacramento from all over the state March 4 to honor McCulloch as he received the first Lifetime Achievement Award at the fifth annual California Journalism Awards sponsored by the Center for California Studies at

California State University-Sacramento.

McCulloch received not one, but two, standing ovations as he made his way through the crowd in the dimly lit restaurant that night. Walking a little more stiffly at 79, robbed of much of his sight by a series of small strokes, but standing tall and straight like the Marine drill sergeant he once was, he spoke to the crowd of 230-plus, without notes, typically self-deprecating, still funny and razor-sharp.

It was entirely fitting that two of the award recipients — *Bee* Political Editor John Jacobs and Lance Williams of the *Examiner* — are McCulloch proteges. The list of reporters and editors who consider McCulloch their mentor — or as Jacobs so aptly put it, their “spiritual father” — is long and distinguished. Doug Hope, senior editor at the *San Diego Union-Tribune* and a former assistant managing editor at *The Bee*, perhaps said it best: “There are many times over the years that I would stop and think, ‘How would Frank handle this?’”

McCulloch shepherded to publication many a project that other editors might have abandoned or, more likely, never undertaken. His

example shines in this age of tabloid sensationalism, with its instant, continuous, mind-numbing web sites and cable programs masquerading as “news,” where serious journalism must compete with the likes of the *Drudge Report*, and screaming pundits drive coverage of — what? The creative use of cigars?

The night before the McCulloch award, the world was treated to a two-hour interview with “that woman,” and we journalists watched it and talked about it and wondered, is this what it’s come to? And if it’s so awful, why are we watching? Tough questions, McCulloch says, often with no clear answers.

“If we continue to inspect every one of those warts and blemishes that people in public office have, can they ever govern?” he asks. “Will democracy work? Where do we draw the line? When I get angry and discouraged and upset with the press, as I do, I remember that there ain’t no second best. It’s all we’ve got. But there are a whole bunch of serious questions we have to ask ourselves.” 🏠

A Sacramento Bee reporter for 13 years, Sigrid Bathen is senior editor of the California Journal. She can be reached at sigridb@statenet.com

by Sigrid
Bathen



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A mixed-up blessing for environmentalists

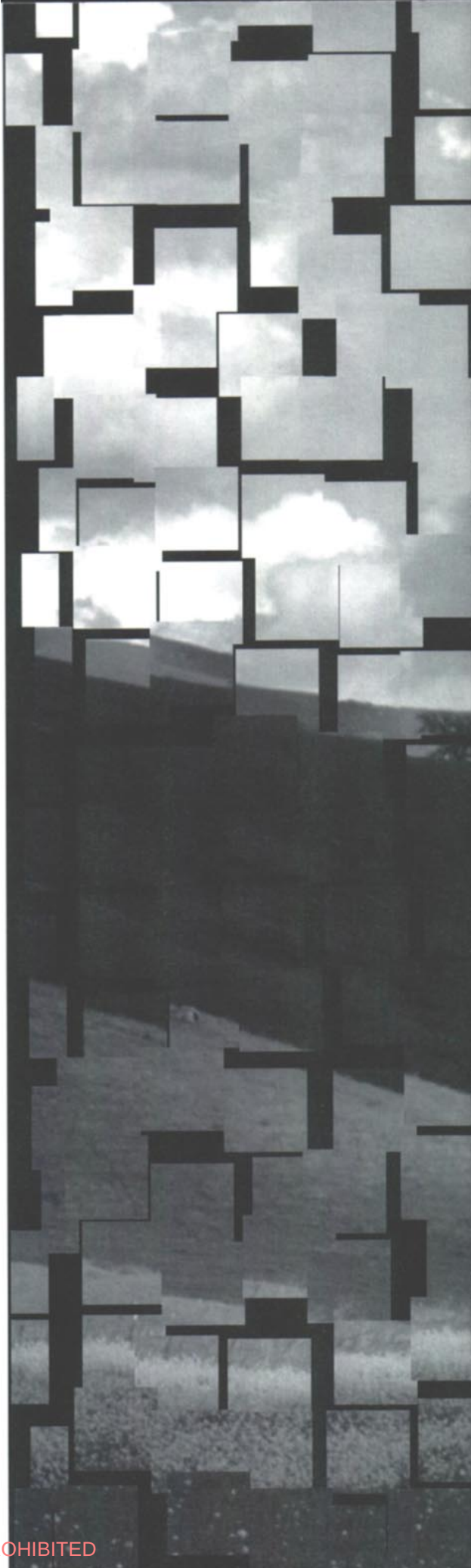
With Democrats holding the reins of power in the Capitol, this should be the best of times for environmentalists hungering for friends in high places. Trouble is, while the enviros built up great expectations, the elected Democrats decided they must prove that theirs is a lighter shade of green.

By Max Vanzi

Governor Gray Davis' mantra of moderation in all things obviously sat well enough with California voters to earn him a 20-point landslide last November over the hapless Dan Lungren. But for those who, having cheered the election outcome, now urge the new Democratic governor to take a stand, set a course, sign on to their noble causes — well, moderation can be perplexing, and the governor who lives by it often hard to read.

Just ask Capitol environmental activists, a diverse group of independent thinkers who know they must win the governor's approval to advance their various agendas, but with this governor clearly differ over how best to do it.

Should supporters expect him to approve only the most modest of proposals to clean the air and waterways, check urban







question, and already the Capitol has been treated to one minor example of what does not work.

Silence at the top

In these new Democratic times, an impromptu coalition of Capitol environmentalists — minus the Sierra Club, among others — stepped forth in February to plead for Davis to acknowledge and act on mounting environmental needs in the face of a state population expected to top 50 million in the next three decades. A report to this effect called for a commitment of more general-fund money for the environment to reverse 10 years of funding decline.

Davis was silent to the plea. Press secretary Michael Bustamante told reporters that the governor has a good record of environmental protection but that, for the moment, he was tied up with education as his “primary focus.”

Earlier, Davis sent another mixed, if disturbing, signal to environmental hopefuls waiting to see where the governor’s moderation was leading. He made it widely known that his Resources Agency chief, Mary Nichols, had exceeded her authority when she withdrew from court records a state legal brief favoring farm interests in an ongoing Central Valley lawsuit over water.

Farmers and environmentalists have fought in court for years over a portion of the water flowing to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Agriculture interests argue that, once set aside for environmental purposes upstream, the water should be added to that which is sucked out of the Delta into canals serving the needs of south valley farmlands. Environmentalists argue that unless the quantity of water in question — more than 800,000 acre-feet a year — flows unimpeded to San Francisco Bay, certain species of marine life will die.

Davis not only ordered Nichols’ action rescinded, he reinforced his message that she had overstepped herself by reinstating the state’s friend-of-the-court brief — on the side of the farmers, close to the position taken earlier by former GOP Governor Pete Wilson.

Nichols was contrite, saying her attempt to distance the state from the farmers’ position “was an action that was taken too quickly without adequate consultation in advance.” Several environmentalists, however, said they liked the fact that she tried.

But were they witnessing the beginning of a trend? Perhaps, especially given Davis’ known desire to patch things up politically with farmers in the Central Valley, not one of his big political strongholds.

sprawl and preserve the state’s natural wonders? Or should they rally the public behind sterner stuff — pressure the governor to ban toxic farm pesticides, for example; say no to damming more mountain rivers; reject a nuclear waste dump at Ward Valley in the Southern California desert?

That there is no consensus became clear in dozens of interviews with the major environmental lobbying groups, with their friends and foes in the Legislature and with sources in key roles who spoke on condition they not be named.

Most do agree that now is the time to press their cases with Sacramento’s Democratic troika — the big Assembly majority, clear Senate majority, Davis as governor. Choosing the right approach to the one-party powerhouse is the

Headwaters heralded

But then there was this: In one of the biggest environmental fights so far this year, over the Headwaters Forest of ancient redwoods on the North Coast, Davis and Nichols as well as most environmental groups and key lawmakers were all in synch. In the end, by hanging tough, the Davis administration, the federal government and concerned lawmakers closed the deal that saved a treasured enclave of centuries-old trees on logging land owned by Houston corporate raider Charles Hurwitz.

With minutes ticking away toward a deal-breaking deadline, Hurwitz caved in to pressure to hand over 10,000 acres of historic redwoods in the Headwaters area for \$480 million in public money. The deal also required the billionaire to agree to strict logging restrictions to save spawning salmon and other wildlife on the rest of his 210,000 acres in Humboldt County, where he had stepped up logging two- and three-fold after capturing the property in a 1985 hostile takeover of Pacific Lumber Company.

Not all preservers of trees applauded the deal. No-compromise groups such as Earth First! said they would continue protesting logging operations on Hurwitz land. Protester Julia Butterfly, sitting in a tree for over a year now, announced she was staying put.

But the Headwaters deal was good enough for most conservationists, and Davis had not equivocated to obtain it.

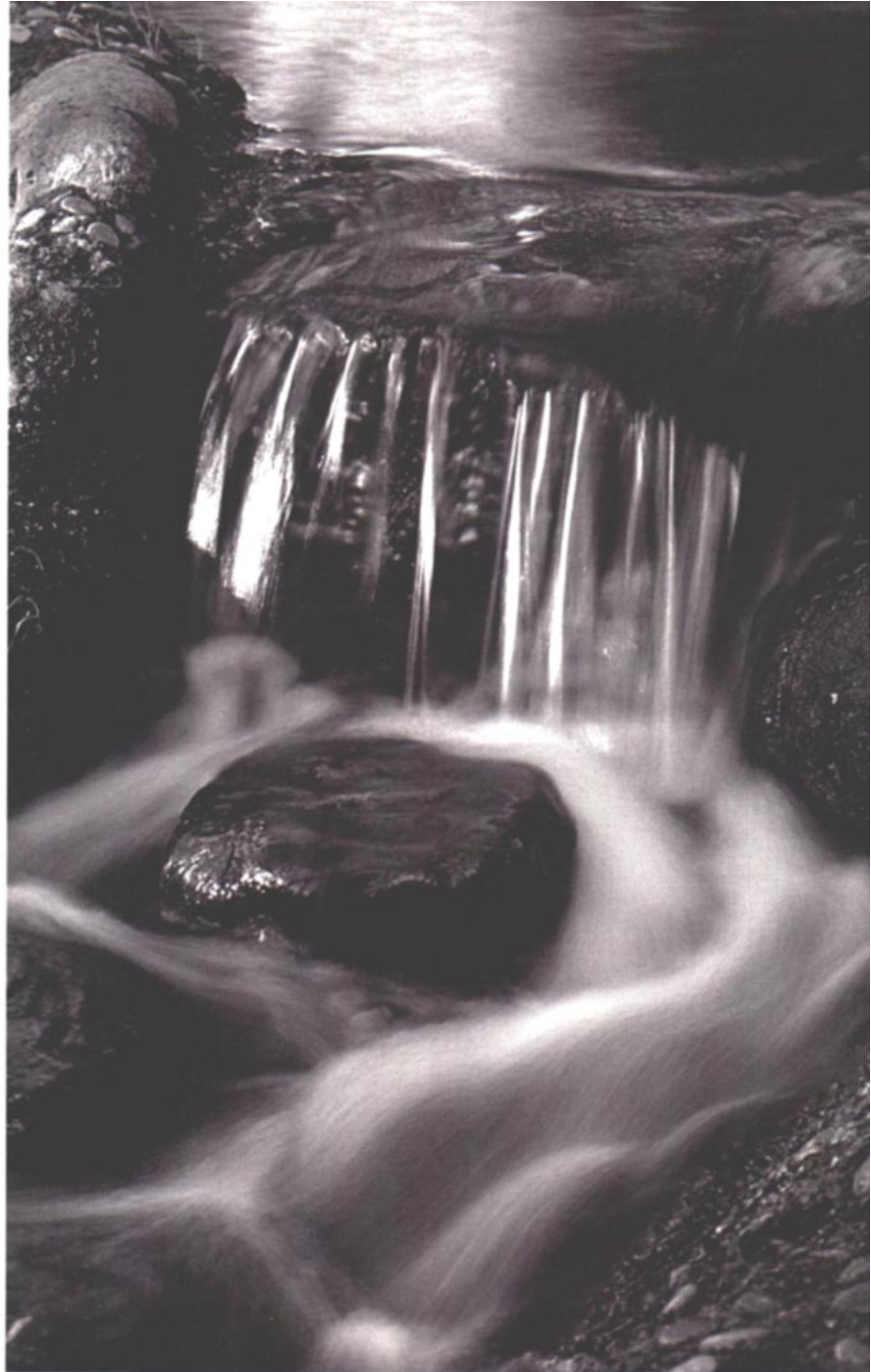
Still, some in the environmental ranks claimed the decision to stand fast on Headwaters came with virtually no political risk for Davis. Presumably, Hurwitz is not among the business interests Davis would want to woo. Pacific Lumber is, after all, a company that had violated state forestry laws so flagrantly that even Pete Wilson's administration had imposed sanctions.

Last November, the state yanked Pacific Lumber's license to cut trees on its Humboldt County holdings except through the use of outside contractors.

A mixed picture

For environmental purists, even after Headwaters, Davis' overall intentions on environmental protection remained unclear. In the first weeks of the Davis administration, environmental lobbyists and their friends looked to the people Davis was picking to run key agencies for clues to their future prospects for environmental protection. There, too, the picture was, to some extent, mixed.

Environmentalists took the appointment of Nichols as a good sign. Some quibbled over her choice of aides, and eyebrows were raised when she journeyed to Mendocino



County to sit down and talk friendly with the California Farm Bureau Federation head, Bill Pauli, at his Potter Valley ranch. But she had solid credentials as a member in good standing in environmental circles, including experience as an assistant administrator for air and radiation in the Clinton administration's Environmental Protection Agency.

In the Headwaters Forest settlement, Nichols had been a lead negotiator. Also, in terms of establishing bona fides among the enviro crowd, they regarded as a plus the fact she is viewed skeptically if not alarmingly by the political right.

After visiting with her, Pauli gave Nichols fair marks, although he said "clearly there will be issues on which we

disagree." Less charitable was conservative Republican Assemblyman Keith Olberg, who represents a large southern desert and mountain district and often takes the GOP lead in Assembly debates on the environment.

"The first indication that Gray Davis is not a moderate at all is [the appointment of] Mary Nichols," Olberg said. In the Davis camp, said Olberg, moderation means only moderation from this point onward. The existing "excesses" of environmental protection, he predicted, will be left in place.

Hannigan's on board

Environmentalists also applauded the appointments of former Democratic Assemblyman Tom Hannigan as director of the Department of Water Resources. If you

assume Davis is beholden to agricultural interests, said one knowledgeable source, "the person you want [in charge of water policy] is someone who is not necessarily an environmentalist or an agriculturist."

What you want, the source said, is a Hannigan who is neither but is "open-minded and intellectually honest."

Likewise, several environmental advocates liked the selection of scientist Alan C. Lloyd as the new chairman of the state Air Resources Board. As the head of the one state agency already given high marks by many environmentalists, Lloyd is expected to uphold its reputation. He comes with academic standing as an expert on alternative fuels. He also has served on a regional air board in Southern California.

But not all Davis appointments to environmentally

Will Gray Davis and Bill Lockyer play 'good cop, bad cop?'

By Max Vanzi

Attorney General Bill Lockyer let it be known right from the start that he would be bringing to the state's "top cop" office, along with its crime-fighting role, a new emphasis and heftier resources to protect citizens' civil rights.

Less well known, perhaps, is that he intends to do the same in the service of protecting California's environment.

He may, in fact, turn out to be more aggressive on that front than Governor Gray Davis, who counsels moderation on many sticky issues, as most environmental disputes turn out to be.

On his first full day in office, Democrat Lockyer sought to join in a legal action defending a ban on jet skis and other small engines that release raw fuel containing allegedly hazardous contaminants into Lake Tahoe. Lockyer subsequently appeared personally in a federal courtroom where he was granted permission for the state to side against engine manufacturers who oppose the ban.

"I wanted to make sure that my own personnel as well as the external world understood that environmental law enforcement is a significant part of our responsibility. I'll not assign it to some back burner," Lockyer said during an interview as he munched on cashew nuts in the august surroundings of the attorney general's office.

Intervention in the Tahoe lawsuit "was designed to make the statement that environmental quality is part of our law enforcement duty."

Besides its crime-fighting role, said Lockyer, a big part of his office's duties will be defending Gray Davis and his agencies in court. "I told the governor I think he's entitled to loyal, competent and aggressive lawyering," he said. The governor, in turn, approved an additional \$750,000 in the attorney general's budget, in part so Lockyer could build up his environmental enforcement unit.

But much of what Lockyer can do for the environment he can do on his own, without authorization from the governor. Nor is Lockyer concerned, he said when asked, whether he might get out in front of Davis as an active defender of the California environment.

"I don't measure my job responsibilities or philosophy against some other politician as a benchmark," Lockyer said. "It just doesn't have any meaning to me."

Lockyer can independently pursue cases where a litigant alleges violations of Proposition 65, the voter-approved initiative prohibiting the spread of dangerous toxins.



sensitive posts are met with cheers. The appointment of Winston Hickox to head the state EPA prompted disappointment among some environmentalists. The mildest complaints were that Hickox couldn't be expected to get tough with business and industry.

A spokesman for Hickox said the criticism is unfounded. "He's going to be a balanced cabinet secretary consistent with the governor's objectives," the spokesman said.

Some were cool, also, to the choice of former Assemblyman Rusty Areias as head of the Department of Parks and Recreation. Noting Areias experienced financial troubles running his own Central Valley family farm, one source said he was hardly the right choice to oversee one of the state's most challenged agencies, one faced with the task of

restoring a park system reeling from a lack of money and resources.

Arieas Disagrees

The criticism is undeserved, Areias said. Once the courts have sorted out a dispute between the Areias family and bankers who he said forced the property into bankruptcy, it will be clear that "the bank treated the family unfairly" and "my reputation and that of my family will be restored."

Advocates for new controls on toxic pesticides were watching with trepidation who might be Davis's director of the Department of Pesticide Regulation. They figured it would not be someone that farm interests would find objectionable. Another decision indicative of the governor's

Lockyer said his staff is reviewing the facts in a case now where an advocacy group has asked the attorney general to join in a lawsuit against oil companies said to be poisoning groundwater with leakage from underground tanks.

"We don't have the resources to investigate 5,000 underground tanks," Lockyer said. But if the plaintiffs are right, "It's a very significant environmental hazard throughout the state." Lockyer may decide to intervene, for example,

"with respect to some specific sites." In such cases, he said, "under the terms of the initiative, the AG has a stronger role" to play than local prosecutors.

The attorney general can also bring independent lawsuits where "I don't represent a state agency; I represent the people of California. Lake Tahoe is an example," Lockyer said.

Pumping up

Lockyer, 57, who spent 25 years in the Legislature until he was termed-out last year, left little doubt during the interview that he intends to, as one admirer



put it, "pump up his environmental efforts" by using the tool of independent lawsuits.

Lockyer discourages speculation that he will single-handedly take on every environmental fight that comes along. He is a lawyer now, not primarily a policy-maker. "It's not that I don't have a desire to make the world better, and environmental advocacy is part of that, but much of it is defined by what comes in the door rather than what we would initiate."

Still, he seems bent on being far more active on behalf

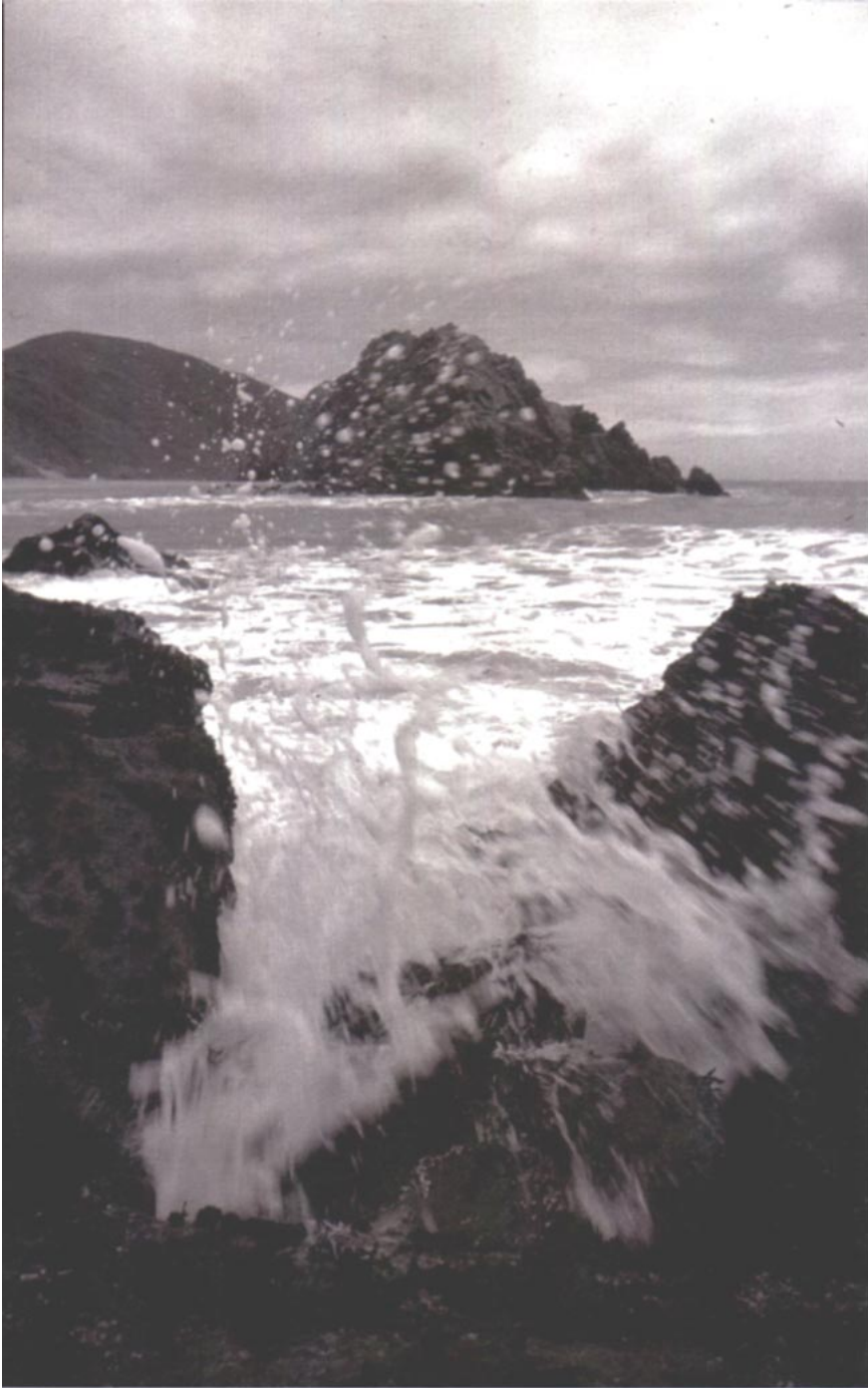
of the environment than his Republican predecessor, Dan Lungren. Lockyer noted, approvingly, that John Van de Kamp, when he was attorney general for the eight years preceding Lungren, "filed about 200 independent environmental actions. Lungren [in eight years] did fewer than 20, and some were on the side of property rights rather than environmental plaintiffs."

Environmental lobbyists are pleased with Lockyer and many look to him for bolder action than they can expect from Davis. And that might work well for Davis, one advocate speculated. "One of our main themes to the new governor has been: Simply enforce the existing laws," said the lobbyist who asked not to be named. "In a way, I can see Gray Davis and Bill Lockyer playing good cop, bad cop," with Davis handing off the controversial cases to Lockyer who would have no problem enforcing the letter of the law.

Lockyer gets his reputation as a strong environmental advocate from his record in the Legislature. As Senate president pro tempore, he created one of the most potent power centers for environmental protection that an advocate could hope for. He brought the Senate's Environmental Quality Committee into being in early 1997. He named as its chairman the longtime environmental advocate and former Stanford law professor Senator Byron Sher.

Choosing justice

Lockyer used his leadership position "to make sure the Senate did the right thing [for the environment] rather than to be the author of a lot of bills," said a Capitol source. "He's not a rabid environmentalist. But he cares for the environment in a way that fits in with his bigger caring about people's welfare." Lockyer said as much in his inaugural speech in January. "Whether children are injured by pollution of the water they drink or the air they breathe, we must and will choose justice," the new AG said. Or, as he said in a later speech, "We can't [allow] the garbage dumps and power plants and emitters of toxic pollution to [be located] where poor people live. That form of regulation is going to get scrutiny in California." 🏠



environmental inclinations was his selection of Robert Hight to head the Department of Fish and Game, which is often at the center of heated debates over economic interests versus protection of wildlife species. Hight, for years executive officer of the State Lands Commission, got good marks from environmentalists as the lead negotiator on the Headwaters deal.

Most major activist groups — the Sierra Club, the Planning and Conservation League, the California League of Conservation Voters, the CalPIRG organization — and their legislative allies seem to agree on what the big goals are. They include halting urban sprawl, healing polluted waterways, rehabilitating a dilapidated park system and a multitude of other environmental rescue tasks.

The unity, however, crumbles over tactics. Compare, for example, the views of long-time environmental lobby-

ist Jerry Meral, head of the comparatively conservative Planning and Conservation League, with those of Tom Hayden, chair of the Senate Natural Resources and Wildlife Committee and passionate advocate for full protection of endangered and threatened species.

Meral cautions there is only so much that can be done for environmental protection under Davis who is nevertheless "better than the [Republican] alternative."

Meral said big money bills could still get stuck in legislative finance committees. Or, even with Davis' support, a general obligation resources bond might get blocked by Republicans, who still have sufficient numbers in both houses to stop bond proposals.

Deep pockets

Another obstacle to the passage of environmental legislation will be the influence of deep-pocket political contributions by business interests, said Meral. Expansion of the state bottle bill, for example, to include deposits on wine and juice containers is a worthy pursuit.

"We'll try," said Meral, "but industry won't sit by and let that happen."

As for Davis' support of environmentalists' desires, "he ran as a moderate. He said it a million times," Meral said. "He's not going to simply do everything we want."

To which Hayden replies, in effect: So what? Push anyway. Speaking generally, not naming any activist or lobbyist by name, Hayden said environmentalists should lose the defeatist attitude.

They should, he said, "crawl out from under the rock of being defensive" following 16 years of uphill battles against Republican administrations and recognize they have a governor now who "invites you to lobby him." This is because, said Hayden, Davis is a centrist and "a centrist by definition doesn't lead. A centrist adjudicates between pressures."

Getting a \$1 billion resources bond on the ballot this year tops Hayden's list of where the pressure should be applied first. That may be one goal that Davis and Hayden share. Administration sources say the governor is considering support of a water or parks bond. But no doubt there will be differences sooner or later between the governor and environmental activists.

"We should be ready to move into the contested areas and give Gray a constructive push where we need to," Hayden said.

Advocating centrism

Some within environment-friendly circles agree with Hayden — for one, Senate President pro Tempore John Burton (D-San Francisco).

"Advocates are supposed to advocate," said the veteran Democratic lawmaker. "It's up to us in the Legislature to compromise if we have to."

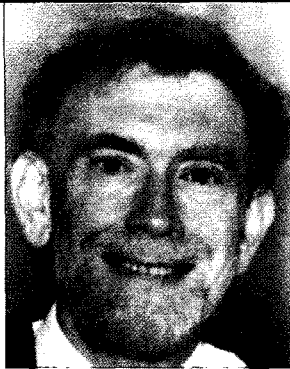
Others agree with Meral that one must follow a moderate course with a moderate governor, at least to some extent.

The fact is, said John White, a contract lobbyist for the Sierra Club and a long-time environmentalist, Davis "can say he didn't need us very much" to get elected. "He won by 20 points. We can't say that we, or any other single group, made the difference" at the polls.

The reality is, said White, "he's going to be most receptive to solutions and consensus that don't require him to choose between us and the business or the ag community. And in the end if he does have to choose, he will choose a good part of the time to go with them. We in the environmental community will press our points [with Davis] but we have to be prepared to tell him not just what we want but why what we want will work for other people."

"Throwing bombs is not a tactic that will work," said Teresa Schilling of the California League of Conservation Voters. "We're working in an era when the governor is with us on solving environmental problems."

There's nothing new in the fact that environmentalists



Jerry Meral, Planning and Conservation League

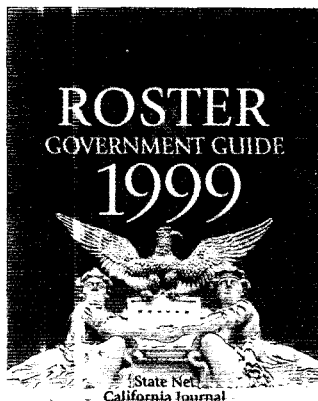


Tom Hayden

disagree over tactics. "They're not a monolith," said a powerful ally, state Sen. Byron Sher. What is new are the opportunities presented by a new gubernatorial team, one that is more accepting of long-denied environmental goals. Divisions among advocates therefore carry greater consequences, as would anything that dilutes public pressure, especially now with a governor who owes his success to a keen ability to respond to public sentiment. The stakes rise higher still as the public becomes increasingly aware of the classic conflict within the finite borders of California be-

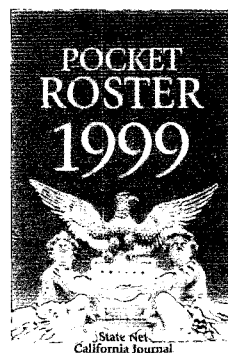
tween preserving the state's natural resources and the rising demands placed on those resources by a tax-paying population. To take as an example the most elemental of those resources - the land itself - 270,000 acres of California farmland vanished beneath suburban sprawl between 1984 and 1996, a fact cited using official state data by Daniel Press, a professor of environmental studies at UC Santa Cruz. People can't help but feel environmental consequences, whether cosmic in nature like urban sprawl or air pollution, or micro-cosmic like the local furor triggered by the poisoning of unwanted species of fish in a single lake.

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One of the most hopeful about environmental prospects under Davis is Sher, one of the fraternity's most influential voices, architect of the toughest provisions in the Headwaters deal and the chairman of the Senate Environmental Quality Committee.

Interviewed during the euphoria surrounding the successful completion of the forest agreement, Sher said activists have a "great opportunity to show the governor where environmental achievements can be his successes. It's a question of not confronting or challenging him but of convincing him of the [merits of] the project. Do that and he'll get behind you, like he did on Headwaters."

The moderate approach

As a moderate, Davis "is always going to look at the impact on" business, Sher said. "There will be times when he doesn't go where you want him to go, or make an appointment where you would have preferred someone else. But over the long haul, he'll be a good environmental governor."

Wendy Wendlandt, political director of the California Public Research Interest Group, an active lobbying organization called CalPIRG for short, isn't so sure. "Polls show that people are willing to do far-reaching things to protect

the environment," she said, but Davis resists.

"He doesn't want to be seen siding with environmentalists," Wendlandt said, and the remark rings true insofar as one can tell from talking to those around him. Notwithstanding Headwaters, administration aides and some of the governor's supporters in the Legislature seem inclined to distance themselves philosophically from a strong environmental point of view. Several made the point in describing environmentalists in general: Their goals are too extreme, or, they refuse to consider economic consequences. In the words of liberal Assemblywoman Carole Migden, who came under attack from some quarters within the Sierra Club while the Headwaters controversy was cooking, "Environmentalists often get propelled by the most radical elements of their movement."

Whatever the governor's relations with the movement's hard chargers, his own credentials as an environmental guardian are solid, said Davis spokesman Bustamante.

"He's got a long track record of working hard on behalf of the environment," Bustamante said, especially "where he has worked to enhance coastal access and coastal protection and to preserve wetlands." He made a clear stand on Headwaters and he is "absolutely committed" to preventing, beyond that already approved, any additional

Mary Nichols, Resources Secretary: To the woodshed ... and back

By Cynthia H. Craft

For the eight years that Pete Wilson was governor, the Sierra Club was essentially *persona non grata* — frozen out of access to the state's chief decision-maker. Never mind the club's massive membership, and the fact of California's tremendous natural resources; Wilson refused to ever meet with Sierra Club representatives face-to-face.

So it's no surprise, really, that when time came to greet the new Democratic administration of Governor Gray Davis — and his Resources Secretary, Mary Nichols — the Sierra Club and other like-minded groups practically fell all over themselves with great expectation, like overactive puppies too long starved for attention.

Nichols, for one, swiftly set out to make up for lost time and accommodate the pent-up policy demand. But though her actions may have seemed to her a no-brainer, they were too fast and too bold for her deliberative boss. Her most

notorious move came when she yanked back an eleventh-hour, pro-farmer legal brief that Wilson's team filed in a water lawsuit. Rejecting farmers' arguments for more water, Nichols supported an environmentalist position: let the water flow naturally, undiverted.

The result? Davis made an example of Nichols. He jerked back and shortened her leash, so to speak, resubmitting the farmers' brief over hers.

Nichols, 53, served four years in the Clinton adminis-



offshore oil drilling along the coast, Bustamante said.

A longer list

Environmentalists would tell Bustamante the list should be longer. Using the governor's bully pulpit and his bill-signing ball-point, he could toughen weak penalties for inland oil spills. He could increase the less than 1 percent in the general fund budget that goes to environmental protection.

He could agree to expand recycling to include deposits on more kinds of food and drink containers. He could work into his vaunted school improvement agenda new benefits for urban schools that would be so attractive it would help halt the march of urban sprawl across dwindling open spaces. He could say where he stands on the water wars — more dams or no more dams. He could nix that Ward Valley nuclear waste dump.

By the time this article is published, Davis may have acted on another pressing issue of the times — whether the gasoline additive MTBE poses a health hazard for Californians. The compound makes fuel burn cleaner, but it also escapes into the earth from leaky tanks or contaminated lakes, entering drinking water sources as a suspected carcinogen, according to several studies.

State law requires the governor to "take appropriate action" on MTBE to protect public health following hearings and release of a UC-Davis study that recommends a phase-out.

The law does not spell out what action that might be, so Davis presumably has some leeway, but a deadline for him to take a stand was looming in late

March. Environmentalists were watching closely.

In dealing with a governor who swings in and out of the environmentalist orbit, the MTBE decision would be one more indication of where starship Davis is headed. 🏛️

Max Vanzi is a former *Los Angeles Times* editor and reporter who now is a freelance writer in Sacramento. Comments on this article may be e-mailed c/o editor@statenet.com.



tration as an assistant administrator for air pollution policies in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Like many Davis appointees, her ties to the governor stretch back to Governor Jerry Brown's administration, during which she was secretary of environmental affairs and chair of the state Air Resources Board. By all accounts, Nichols has a sterling resume and, as one of California's first environmentalist lawyers, it can be argued that she is a true pioneer.

Yet it is for trailblazing of another sort — being first to beat a path to the governor's doghouse — that this accomplished administrator is perhaps best known in Capitol circles these days.

Since the infamous incident — and widely circulated reports of a cabinet meeting in which Nichols was scolded by Davis (though she wasn't named, it was clear who was bound for the woodshed) — all eyes have been on Nichols. To statehouse insiders, hers is *the* test case for what follows when you incur the governor's wrath by acting without prior permission. Indeed, Nichols' standing with Davis was confirmed when he seemingly punished her further by announcing that he alone would choose the next head of the state Fish and Game Department, not Nichols, as would have been customary.

Davis' harshness had the desired effect on Nichols. In public appearances, she is coy or mum on topics that someone of her stature might be expected to remark upon with authority. Newspaper accounts have her guardedly posing hypotheticals instead of answering questions directly.

In the wake of her muzzling, it is difficult for the public

that pays Nichols' salary to get a clear picture of her, or what she stands for. How sharp, how tough is she? Is she an extremist? How much is she willing to bend, or must she be forced into compromise positions? Will she recover her footing as an effective advocate of the environment? How well will she be able to work with farmers, who led her to the doghouse in the first place?

Nichols herself wasn't granting interviews as of press-time, but an impartial view in defense of the Resources Secretary comes from Bill Pauli, head of the 78,000-member California Farm Bureau.

If a picture is worth a thousand words, visualize this anecdote that Pauli tells of a rainy day in February: Mary Nichols in outdoor coat, jeans and boots, hopping out of a puddle-jumper that's just buzzed her over the Headwaters forest and then to Pauli's Mendocino County farm for a visit. She tours the pear orchards on his 2,300-acre ranch. Afterward, she retires with Pauli to the warmth of his country home, where his wife serves up homemade soup and fresh-baked bread at the kitchen table.

The one-on-one visit, *sans entourage*, clearly impressed Pauli. "It was really great," he says. "She came across as a real practical, genuine person."

Pauli says he'd be surprised if farmers didn't get fair and even-handed treatment from Nichols. "She's bright, articulate and well-schooled," he says. "Clearly there will be differences, but there are also areas of agreement." 🏛️

Cynthia H. Craft is managing editor of the *California Journal*. Comments may be sent to cindic@statenet.com.

Devil in the detail

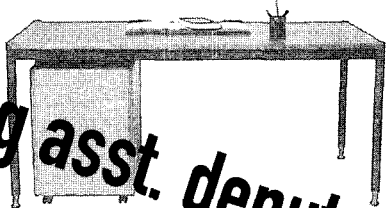
While taking his time putting a government together, Governor Gray Davis has been acting as more of a one-man-band than his predecessors. Critics say he's doing too much. But it hasn't stopped him from scoring some important early policy successes.

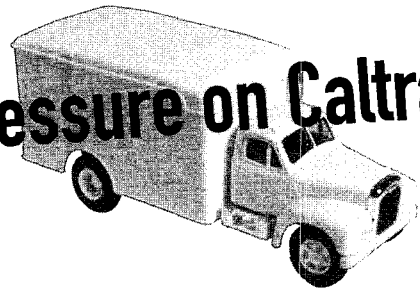
By Steve Scott

In the 1972 Winter Olympics, American figure skater Janet Lynn entered as a contender for the gold medal — a graceful successor to Olympic legend Peggy Fleming and described by one writer as “sunshine on ice.” But Lynn had a problem.

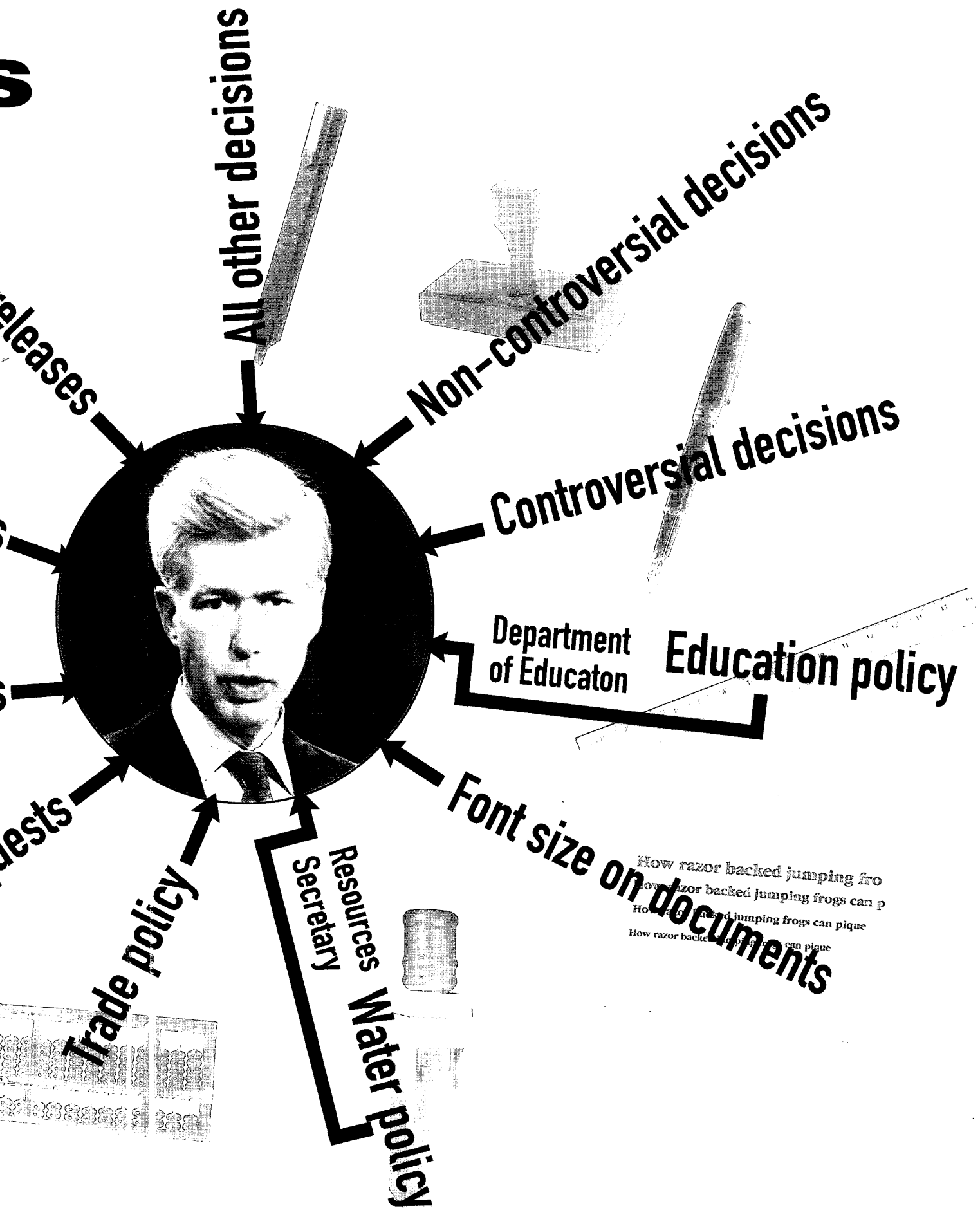
In those days, the rigid rules of the sport required skill not only in the expressive “free skate,” but also in the compulsory, or “school figures” — pre-set patterns that every skater had to master. As expected, Lynn produced a show-stopping free skate that year. But she wound up bringing home only a bronze medal, losing to Trixie Schuba, a more pedestrian Austrian competitor who'd skated her compulsories with the skill of a Swiss watchmaker. It was the compulsories where Lynn lost her edge.

The Gray Davis of 1972 probably wasn't paying too


Hiring asst. deputy direc


Tire pressure on Caltrans vehi


Media/interview



much attention to Janet Lynn back then. But the Gray Davis who sits as governor of California in 1999 probably knows how she felt.

As his new administration closes in on its first 100 days, California's first Democratic governor in nearly two decades has found himself being measured against the pattern set by his two Republican predecessors — Pete Wilson and George Deukmejian. In the "free skate" of policy making, Davis has excelled, boasting successes his deficit-plagued predecessors could only imagine during their first three months in office. But in the "compulsories" of governance — the hun-

dreds of small decisions and acts that go into creating an efficient, effective administration — Davis has had trouble finding a groove.

What makes such judgments relevant at this early stage of his administration is the context in which they occur. During his wildly successful run for governor, Davis billed himself as the most experienced gubernatorial candidate in recent times. The man he chose as his communications director had, while still a journalist, called Davis the "best prepared governor-in-waiting" California had ever seen. Davis boosters say his ability to effectively move his major policy agenda reflects his broad experience, which includes stints as assemblyman, controller and lieutenant governor as well as seven years as chief of staff to Governor Jerry Brown. But detractors have begun to wonder aloud (albeit anonymously) whether the new governor is as prepared as advertised.

"Don't listen to that hype," sniffed one Capitol veteran who has worked with Democrats and Republicans. "The jobs he had [assemblyman, controller, lieutenant governor] have small staffs and are self-contained. And [California] is a different state from 20 years ago [when Davis served under Brown]."

By most accounts, Davis' main organizational deficiency is that, unlike his two predecessors, he did not enter the governorship with a pre-existing cadre of trusted advisors already vetted for loyalty and competence. "We were able to move quickly because George Deukmejian had a built-in group of people, both from the attorney general's office and from his days in the Legislature," said Steve Merksamer, Deukmejian's first-term chief of staff. "I was appointed the day after the election. By the end of Decem-



Davis and his education guru, Gary Hart (L)

ber, we had the entire staff filled, the Cabinet filled, and a good chunk of the directors done." If anything, Wilson's bench was even deeper — as many as 40 or 50 people who'd worked for him during his stints as U.S. senator and mayor of San Diego.

"They knew him," said former Wilson press secretary Dan Schnur. "They understood what he liked and didn't like and what decisions he'd make."

By contrast, Davis is a Lone Ranger. A fairly private person whose pre-gubernatorial lifestyle could be described as austere, Davis has few close friends, apart from his wife, Sharon Davis. While he counts several prominent California Democrats as allies and advisors, only one — 1998 campaign manager Garry South — has built the kind of enduring relationship that characterized the Wilson and Deukmejian teams. South remains a close political advisor, but he eschewed a job within the administration, arguing he can be more help to Davis "on the outside." Moreover, while moving into the executive branch of state government was a new challenge for many of the Deukmejian and Wilson aides, those to whom Davis might have turned were people with whom he'd already worked in the Brown administration. Their attitude: "Been there, done that."

"When Gray came in, his three previous jobs had not been line-reporting jobs," said transition director Barry Munitz. "He didn't have the whole crew [like Wilson]."

Without a ready stable of staffers to import into his administration, Davis has been forced to build one from the ground up. The process has been methodical, reflecting not only Davis' cautious temperament but also the bitter experience of his time with Brown. Many of the appoint-

ments made by Davis' former boss wound up having as much to do with defining his "moonbeam" legacy as anything Brown ever did. Merksamer defends Davis' careful approach, noting that even Brown came to recognize the price he paid for some of his mistakes.

"[Deukmejian and I] asked him at our first meeting if he had any advice," Merksamer recalls. "He said, 'Take your time making your top appointments.'"

More worrisome to some than the pace at which Davis is building his team is how he has approached the job in the meantime. In effect, Davis has become his own chief of staff. He personally interviews candidates not only for Cabinet secretaries and department directors, but also for undersecretaries and assistant directors. Moreover, civil-service-level information officers have passed the word to Capitol journalists that the administration has all but placed a gag order on them, requiring that even relatively minor news releases be cleared with the governor's press office. Experience is only part of this story. Even Davis' closest allies concede he's always had a problem delegating authority or trust. Insiders say that even his closest adviser — South — achieved his status only after an extensive rite of passage.

Friend and foe alike say Davis will have to eventually loosen the reins on his top staff or risk paralysis in those policy areas where he is not focusing. "A governor has to deal with everything," noted Schnur. "You can't say, 'Oh, I'm sorry...the earthquake's off message.'" Munitz says he has "every confidence" Davis will ease off the gas, and even Republicans like Merksamer warn against reading too much into the early micromanagement tendencies.

"He'll run an extremely tight ship for the next six months, but over time I believe he'll begin to loosen up," said Merksamer. "He'll have people in place who understand what the ground rules are, and that's what you want in an administration."

But even as they counsel a looser grip over time, Davis supporters also say there is nothing out of line with his approach to the job in the early going. Allies insist the pace of appointments is not all that far out of line with the transition between Brown and Deukmejian — the last time the governorship changed parties. Davis' top Cabinet jobs were all filled by inauguration day and while departmental jobs are being filled more slowly, the wheels of government continue to grind.

"The only people concerned about the pace of appointments are applicants who want to be appointed, interest groups supporting candidates, gossip mongers who hang around the Capitol, and reporters who think a daily deadline is the end of the world," said former Assemblyman Phil Isenberg, a close Davis ally.

For Isenberg and other Davis allies, the job of counseling patience is made easier by the fact that even if the critics are correct, so far it hasn't mattered. Two and a half months into his first term, Davis can already point to a series of policy accomplishments for which he can rightfully claim a significant share of credit. His four-bill package of education reform measures is moving through the

Democrat-controlled Legislature in the special session he called at the beginning of the year. The package includes a teacher peer-review program, reading improvement programs, a school accountability act and a controversial measure calling for high-school exit exams. While the package has been amended, Davis has been actively involved in the legislative give-and-take, and there is little doubt he will wind up getting much of what he wants.

Davis also has enjoyed good notices outside of his self-imposed educational focus. A February trip to Mexico City with Lieutenant Governor Cruz Bustamante earned him praise from business leaders on both sides of the border, and began easing the hostility that had been generated by Wilson's campaign against illegal immigration. Despite his own budget shortfall, Davis managed to find money to give state employees a short-term pay raise, while at the same time outmaneuvering dissident state workers who had been demanding much more.

In early March, Davis scored perhaps his biggest triumph to date with the successful completion of a long-delayed deal by which the state and federal governments would buy thousands of acres of ancient redwoods in the Headwaters Forest along the North Coast. Environmental leaders praised Davis' "courage" for calling the bluff of Pacific Lumber chief Charles Hurwitz, who bombarded the new governor — unsuccessfully — for changes in the agreement before signing it two minutes before the funding was set to expire. Even an Earth First! activist who'd

**Good for forests.
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Good for recreation.
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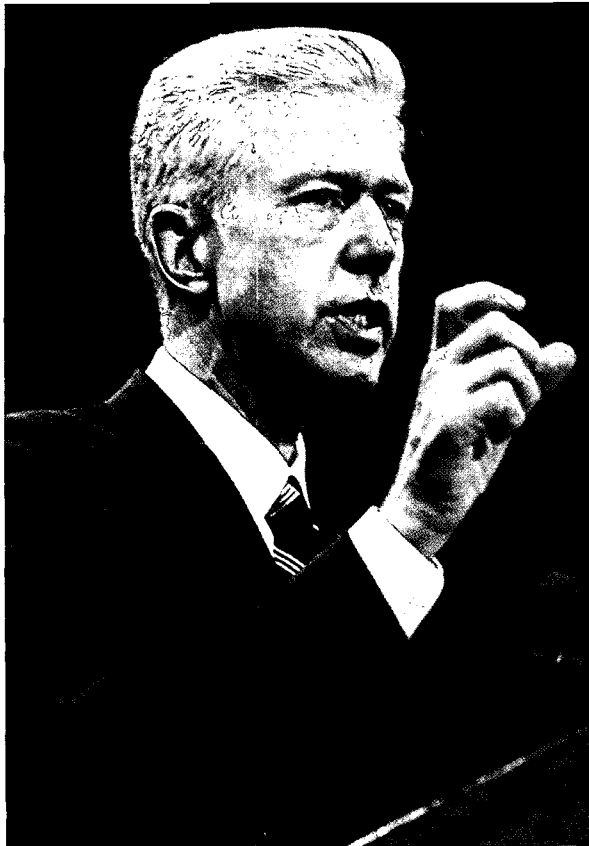
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traveled to Sacramento to heckle Davis at a news conference preceded his call for more forest protection with a "thank you" to the governor for "the good work so far."

"You could go back forever and ask why he does things a certain way, but it doesn't matter," insisted Munitz. "What we have to judge is whether he is effective. So far, it's been more than pretty good."

If there is any universal lesson to be drawn from the early days of the Davis administration, it is that there is nothing either predictable or easy about the job of governing California. Since Davis served under Brown, the governorship has become more powerful in some areas, less powerful in others. "Fundamentally, the job is closer to that of president than any state or local office," noted Schnur. And, like the presidency, no one skill set or personal history guarantees success at the job. Even the "best prepared" politicians learn early that nobody can



be fully prepared.

"It's not just a managerial role — the governor has to be out there leading the charge," said Merksamer. "The only way to get that experience is to actually be governor."

Davis' critics insist he will never effectively exercise leadership until he first leaves some of the minutiae behind. But Davis' allies argue his early policy success proves he understands the importance of that leadership role for which history (and the 2002 electorate) will ultimately make its judgments, rather than his management style. "Six months from now, nobody will care how quickly he made appointments," said Munitz. Political spin? Perhaps, but consider this: Since 1972, Janet Lynn has had four books written about her;

Trixie Schuba is the answer to a trivia question. 🏛️

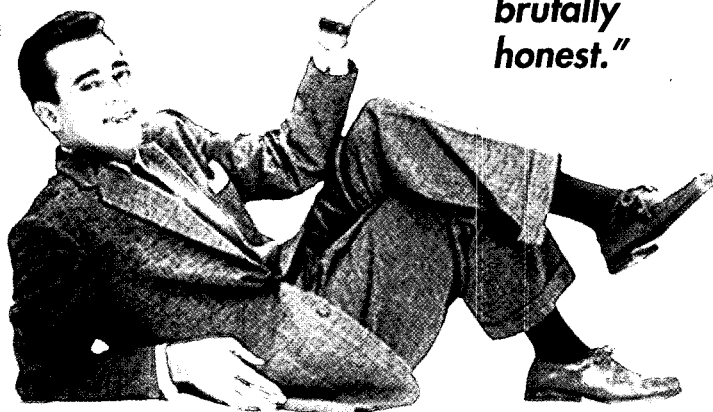
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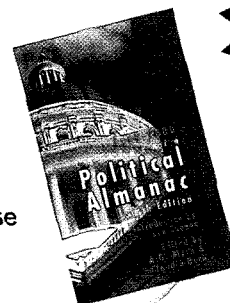
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Unions, Latinos gain ground in the Southland

In late February, the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) won an decade-long battle to represent 74,000 home care workers who provide household assistance to elderly and disabled clients in Los Angeles County. The fallout from this election will have state and national implications.

SEIU is currently California's largest labor union, with more than 300,000 members. It organizes, among others, janitors, some public employees and health-care workers and has already organized home care workers in five Northern California counties. The Los Angeles election secured the largest home-care work force represented by the union and resulted in an increase in membership amounting to more than 10% over the 700,000 workers represented by unions in the state's largest county. The Southland campaign has been billed as the "biggest unionization drive nationally in more than 50 years."

The vote brought into clear focus the "new face" of labor in California — women and minorities, particularly Latinos. According to David Rolf, a key union organizer, "If you look at the demographic changes in Southern California, the labor movement has to figure out how to bring these workers in because they are the backbone of the new, low-wage, service-sector economy."

It also highlighted the political dynamo created by the synergy between two increasingly potent players in California politics - Latinos and unions.

Organized labor has been re-invigorated by the 1998 primary defeat of Proposition 226, which would have required written permission for unions to use member dues for political activities. The movement's punch was affirmed by the resounding victories of union-supported candidates, up and down the California ballot, in last year's general election. And the resurgent electoral clout of labor both reflects and enhances the growing Latino political empowerment.

In Los Angeles, the unions' rejuvenated influence can be traced to a new generation of younger - and mostly Latino - leaders, much as Miguel Contreras, the executive secretary-treasurer of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor.

The SEIU victory in Los Angeles also enhances the burgeoning influence of labor-backed Latino

political leaders; they include California Assembly Speaker Antonio Villaraigosa (D-Los Angeles), who began his career as a union organizer, and Assemblyman Gil Cedillo (D-Los Angeles), a former service employees union leader.

Villaraigosa stood with labor leaders as they announced the vote and he is co-sponsoring legislation to increase state funding for home-care workers if they negotiate a pay raise (a similar bill was vetoed last year by then Governor Pete Wilson). Not coincidentally, SEIU's increasing clout in the Southland could prove especially helpful to the Speaker as he weighs a race for Los Angeles mayor in 2001.

In the wake of SEIU's success, national labor leaders have announced a drive to unionize about 300,000 salaried doctors employed by HMOs and hospitals. About 15,000 members of existing physicians unions will become a part of the National Doctors Alliance, a new umbrella group set up by SEIU. California, considered an area where doctors unions are already relatively strong, will become an initial focus of the organizing campaign.

Unionizing doctors won't be easy. Physicians have traditionally viewed themselves as members of the professional class, separate from the blue-collar workers whom unions have targeted. Nonetheless, doctors have long-standing political clout; they can have a significant impact on the direction managed care takes, as well as on the election of leaders who will define health care priorities. An alliance of physicians, labor and Latinos would amplify the already strong voices of these major political players.

By its very nature, the alliance will be a fragile one. But if it holds together in the massive political and economic crucible of Southern California, that will send a powerful, precedent-setting message: The political calculus of health care reform will — and must — change as economic and demographic shifts occur. And those elected officials charged with reform could find their fortunes dependent on whether - and how - they solve the new equation. 

Contributing Editor Sherry Bebitch Jeffe teaches at the Claremont Graduate School. Comments may be sent to editor@statenet.com.

The unions' rejuvenated influence can be traced to a new generation of younger - and mostly Latino - leaders.

by Sherry
Bebitch Jeffe



Latino Pol

Want to assess the growing impact of Latinos on California's political and cultural life on the eve of the 21st century? Then, keep in mind one or two politicians whose careers to date may, in some small way, sum up not only the coming strength of Latino politics but the difficulty associated with trying to stick to preconceived notions about Latinos and their growing impact on California and its political structure.

Be careful. Don't, for instance, focus only on emerging Latino superstars such as Assembly Speaker Antonio Villaraigosa (D-Los Angeles), Los Angeles County Supervisor Gloria Molina, or Lieutenant Governor Cruz Bustamante. Also include Charlene Zettel — the first Latina

California's body politic tends to regard Latinos as belonging to a vast, untapped, monolithic community that may be wooed en masse. But in truth, the so-called "Latino community" is as multi-faceted as the "Anglo community" it soon will replace as the dominant ethnic group in the nation's most dominant state.

By Anthony York

ever elected to the Assembly as a Republican. Moderate on social issues such as abortion rights, Zettel is a fiscal conservative who hails from Poway in San Diego County — ground zero for battles over illegal immigration. Or focus on Abel Maldonado, another rookie Republican legislator from Santa Maria on the central coast who recently stunned a Democratic colleague by worrying aloud about the fate of farmworkers in the Central Valley.

The fact that Zettel and Maldonado — along with Assembly Minority Leader Rod Pacheco (R-Riverside) and Assemblyman Robert Pacheco (R-Walnut) — sit in the Assembly runs counter to the accepted notion that Latinos are a monolithic interest group fully aligned with the Democratic Party. The "Latino community" is anything but monolithic. It is a diverse association of interest groups, bound together on some issues, divided on others. Politicians who treat it to a one-pitch-covers-all message do so at their peril.

Moreover, despite much talk these days about Latino political strength in the wake of the 1998 elections, there is little examination of the cultural changes spawned by the

itics

ANTONIO R. VILLARA
SPEAKER OF THE ASSEMBLY

A \$1 million, three-way GOP primary produced an historic candidate to succeed termed-out incumbent Goldsmith. This December, businesswoman Charlene Zettel will become the first Latina ever to serve on the republican side of the Assembly and Zettel, a pro-choice moderate with experience on the Poway Unified School Board, easily brushed aside a pair of opponents — one of whom was a former member of the Assembly from the likes of F. ... Committee ...



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increased Latinization of California and how the life experiences of members of the state's fastest-growing demographic group are fundamentally changing the political and cultural landscape in California.

Essentially, "Latino" means many things, and viewing the Latino community is like peering into a varied and richly appointed prism.

of the current immigration wave, one need look no further than Los Angeles County. According to a recent study by Gregory Rodriguez for the Pepperdine School of Public Policy, Latinos accounted for 14 percent of the Southern California population in 1970. Eighty percent of these Latinos were born in the United States. By 1996, the percentage of Latinos among

Times Opinion section and to *California Journal*, took Bautista's hypothesis even further and said the cultural assimilation of Latinos has slowed in recent years with the huge numbers of Latinos coming to California. "On one hand, you have the slowing of certain measures of cultural assimilation, things such as language," he said. "But on the other hand, because of

"The political class ... as well as the print electronic media often confuse the marginalized parts of the Latin with the whole." — Gregory Rodriguez

The political culture of Latinos differs greatly from country to country. While thousands have fled recent civil wars in El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua, the overwhelming majority of Latinos in California hail from Mexico. Nearly two-thirds of Latinos in the United States are of Mexican origin, according to Mexican historian Jaime Suchlicki, a professor of history at the Graduate School of International Studies in Florida. That number is even higher in California.

Like the Irish in the mid-1800s, or the Chinese toward the end of the 19th century, Mexican immigration to California has come in two significant waves, one at each end of the 20th century, and the groups have pronounced political and cultural differences both in Mexico and the United States.

The first wave peaked in the 1920s on the heels of the Mexican Revolution and was made up of those fleeing political change in their homeland. The second, and much larger wave of immigrants peaked throughout the 1970s and '80s, tapering off and steady-ing in the 1990s and was made up of economic refugees who came to California seeking opportunity as the Mexican economy continued along a rocky path.

To get a sense of the size and scope

the total population had jumped to 38 percent, with two-thirds of the Latino population in Southern California foreign-born. The study found fewer than 20 percent of all California Latinos today are third generation or older.

"The two generations of Latinos had different experiences," said David Hayes-Bautista, a professor of public health at the UCLA School of Public Policy who focuses on Latino behavior. "One of the most distinct differences between the generations is the role of language." Before the Chicano movement of the 1960s, many Mexican immigrants shunned Spanish in favor of English. "We were punished if we spoke Spanish at school in the 1950s," Bautista said. "There was a real sense among the first-wave immigrants that it would be a disservice to teach their children Spanish."

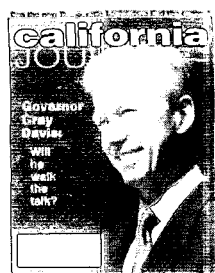
But Bautista says that is changing with subsequent generations. "There's a lot more stuff available in Spanish now, it's a lot more accepted," he said. "There has been an explosion of Spanish media, and you're not being punished on the playground for speaking Spanish. It's a lot easier for kids today to be fluent and literate in both languages."

Rodriguez, who is also an associate editor of Pacific News Service and contributor to the Sunday *Los Angeles*

[Proposition] 187 and the federal welfare reform legislation and the targeting of Latinos politically, civic assimilation — naturalization, voting — is at an all-time high. More than ever, living in the United States means naturalizing." (Proposition 187, passed by voters in November 1994, eliminated social, medical and educational benefits for illegal immigrants.)

The pace with which Latinos are participating in the political process and their growth among the overall voting population has dwarfed discussion of two divergent cultural trends among California Latinos. Latinos, for instance, are the largest group of new immigrants in the state, both legal and illegal. Overwhelmingly, they have come to America to live the Horatio Alger myth, and like other American immigrants before them, fall into the lower socioeconomic strata, working service jobs and taking other low-skilled, low-wage work.

At the same time, there is a burgeoning Latino middle class, fueled by the children of the first-wave immigrants — children born in the United States. Areas like the San Gabriel and San Fernando valleys are home to an increasing population of Latinos who are buying houses, starting small businesses and marrying non-Latinos at extremely high rates. According to the



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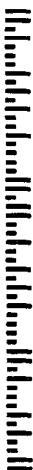
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1997 Rodriguez study, more than 31 percent of Latinos with household incomes of \$35,000 per year or higher in Southern California have married someone of a different ethnic background. Using the \$35,000 figure as a yardstick, half of all U.S.-born Latinos in the region are now middle class.

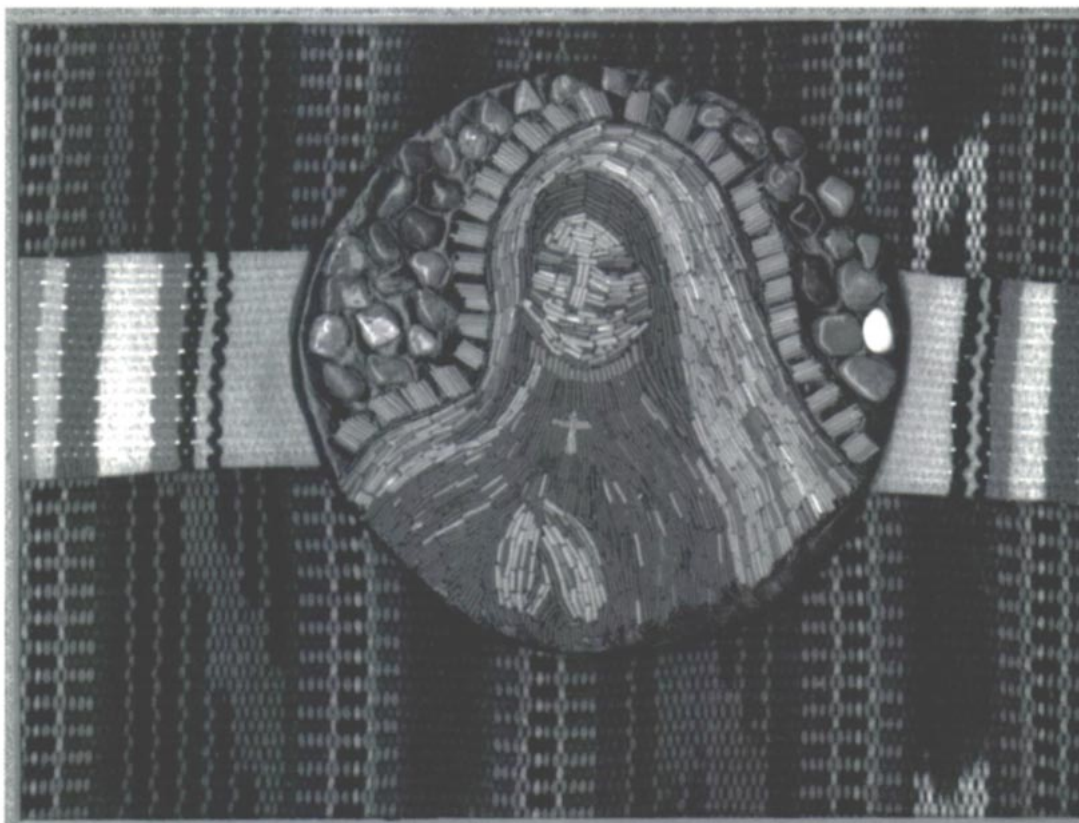
Most Latinos in the Legisla-

and most population

ture are the middle-class children of first-wave immigrants. Lawmakers with divergent political beliefs such as Villaraigosa and Maldonado still share a common ethnic and generational experience and ethnic heritage that has shaped them in similar ways politically, even though they identify with different political parties.

Maldonado is the son of Mexican immigrants. His father came to the United States in 1965 to work the fields in Santa Maria as a guest worker and later became a legal resident. Starting as a farm worker, Maldonado went on to own his own farm within one generation. "We honored Cesar Chavez," Maldonado said. "Did we always agree on his policies and tactics? Not always. But the man was standing up for people like us, and we believed he was doing wonderful things."

Chavez was also the main political icon for a young Villaraigosa, then known as Tony Villar, who underwent his political awakening in Los Angeles in the 1960s. Villaraigosa was raised by his mother, a second-generation American, after his immigrant father left when Antonio was only five. After his father left, Villaraigosa's mother decided to speak only English to her children, and Villaraigosa's Spanish skills languished until the 1960s.



"The grape boycotts and the rise of the Chicano movement, all of that was part of it," Villaraigosa remembered. "Rediscovering Spanish was a big part of the political movement of the time."

This shared political legacy has morphed in some very different ways in Villaraigosa and Maldonado. But imprints of the 1960s and the legacy of Chavez are still noticeable when discussing politics with either legislator. Villaraigosa has emerged as a primary advocate for immigrant rights, pushing for state dollars to pick up the slack when the federal government eliminated welfare benefits for legal immigrants. "That's where I come from, and that's an issue that's very important to me," Villaraigosa said.

The struggles of Cesar Chavez have greatly influenced the political priorities of Maldonado as well. Recently, Assemblywoman Sarah Reyes (D-Fresno) introduced legislation aimed at assisting Central Valley growers whose citrus crops were damaged in last winter's freeze. Before her bill went before the Assembly Rules Committee, Reyes was approached by Maldonado. "He told me his concern

was about the workers. That was an amazing thing for me to hear coming from a Republican," Reyes said.

Just as the rise of the United Farm Workers and the grape boycotts shaped a generation of political activists in the 1960s, the 1994 and 1996 elections have galvanized a new generation of activists motivated by Propositions 187 and 209, which sought to eliminate affirmative-action programs.

Those campaigns, coupled with the anti-Latino overtones apparent in former Governor Pete Wilson's 1994 re-election effort, could cripple Republicans politically in coming years. According to a May 1998 study by the Latino Issues Forum, 52 percent of all Latinos currently registered to vote have signed up since 1995. Eighty-five percent of all newly registered voters in California are Latino and the average Latino voter is younger and less-educated than the average California voter.

"No question, that's because of 187 and 209," Villaraigosa said. "It was a clarion call for people across the state."

But the unity among many Latinos against Proposition 187 does

not mean that Latinos will allow their ethnic identity to shape them politically in any permanent way. "That is really going to depend on how well the Republican Party learns from the lessons of 187 and 209," Bautista said.

Bautista cautions that efforts to handicap the Latino vote by race or socioeconomic status are likely to prove inaccurate. He says a more complete understanding of Mexican and American Latino culture is needed to understand how the Latino community will behave politically. "We don't fall into the nifty liberal/conservative paradigm. We are very issue-driven voters and don't identify very strongly with any political party. I start asking myself if Latinos really exist because we generally don't agree on anything."

Though Latinos are traditionally seen as having a conservative bent on social issues, a trend pollsters often attribute to their Catholicism and strong sense of family, Bautista points out that Latino Catholicism is often "an entirely different kettle of fish. It's a very individual kind of Catholicism. I think culturally, we may be kind of conservative, but we're conservative in private," he said. "Generally a lot of us are very live-and-let-live."

"Politics can't grasp this," Rodriguez said. "This change is much more profound. Attempts to label this group politically just reinforce the notion that we're all separate communities."

But in the short term, the California Republican Party has some damage control to do among Latino voters in the wake of the four-to-one split in

favor of Democrats in last fall's election. "It's the simplest thing in the world to count the numbers," said GOP strategist Tony Quinn. "Republicans simply cannot win in California without one-third of the Latino vote."

Quinn says the Latino middle class represents the party's best chance at regaining its electoral success in the Golden State. "We're never going to go into East LA and register people to vote Republican. The Republican Party needs to be concerned about the middle class, the Latinos who voted for Reagan, in places like Montebello and the San Fernando Valley."

The mobilization of Latino voters is already shifting the state's political landscape. Republican gubernatorial nominee Dan Lungren made a conscious effort to avoid 187 and 209 in his 1998 gubernatorial campaign, and he came out against Proposition 227, which introduced wholesale reforms to the state's bilingual education system. And California Republicans are virtually tripping over themselves in an effort to court Texas Governor George W. Bush to run for president, in no small part because he received nearly half of his state's Latino vote.



Abel Maldonado



Sarah Reyes

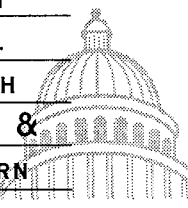
Ultimately, Rodriguez predicts Latinos may drive both parties to the political center. Though the largely-lower-class, new immigrant pockets in East and South

Central Los Angeles continue to elect liberal Latino legislators, Latino lawmakers from the Central Valley, and the growing Latino suburban communities in Los Angeles reflect their more moderate constituencies.

"The demographic change presents a real challenge for Democrats to stay on line in terms of what issues are important to the Latino community," Reyes said. "One thing we learned in the Wilson era is that it may take us a while to mobilize, but when you work against us, we'll work against you."

Rodriguez predicts the rapid growth of the Latino middle class will eventually force the Democratic Party to change its tactics when courting Latino voters. "The perverse nature of the political spoils system has encouraged non-white politicians and activists to present their communities as profoundly disadvantaged," Rodriguez wrote in his 1997 study. "The political class ... as well as the print and electronic media often confuse the most marginalized parts of the Latino population for the whole."

Perhaps the more profound change is within the California Republican Party, where Latinos in the state Assembly seem to be having a moderating effect on their caucus. Lawmakers such as Assembly members Rod Pacheco, Zettel and Maldonado are more moderate than many of their colleagues in the Republican caucus.

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Antonio Villarreal

Just as Maldonado's concerns with farm worker protection in a party closely aligned with growers is a significant change, Pacheco has distinguished himself from his Republican predecessors by supporting government funding of prenatal care for undocumented residents.

"I think there is more of an acceptance among Hispanics that government can be part of the solution," Pacheco said. "It's certainly not all of the solution, but it's not necessarily the enemy." This is in direct contrast to many past and present Republican legislators who see government as some kind of evil, runaway purveyor of bureaucratic red tape and tax forms that must be pared back if the concept of individual liberty is to survive.

Bautista said the reasons for this affinity toward moderation among Latinos are partially cultural. In his studies of Latino health and behavior patterns, he found Latinos are less likely to smoke or drink and are more likely to raise their children in two-parent households than other segments of the population. Proportionally, fewer Latinos work in the public sector or use public assistance than other ethnic groups, and Latinos comprise the highest participation of any group in new job-training programs created by the state's new welfare system. Yet while they may want uniforms for their children in public schools, or be strong advocates for teen curfews, they are still registering and voting Democratic in droves.

The question is whether this tradi-

tional streak will be diminished by the continued embrace of American culture as the longevity of California's Latino population increases. "We forget the power of American culture," Rodriguez said. "This is the most culturally imperialistic society in the history of the world."

The American political system is,

by design, a reflection of American culture. The question is how the cultural change afoot in California ultimately will be reflected in its political institutions. More than 500 years ago, in what is now



Charlene Zettel

Mexico, a poor Indian named Juan Diego was visited by the Virgin Mary at the top of Mount Tepeyac. But the Mary that appeared before Juan Diego was brown-skinned, the Virgin de Guadalupe. Juan Diego rushed to tell the local Spanish bishop of his encounter. At first, the bishop refused even to see him. When the bishop finally agreed to talk to him, he doubted the Indian's story and said if this dark-faced lady was the real McCoy, she should give the bishop a sign. Juan Diego returned to the mountain, and the Virgin presented him with a blooming rose bush in the dead of winter. Juan Diego picked the roses, bundled them in his robe and presented them to the bishop. When he unwrapped his robe to let the roses fall to the floor, the image of the brown-skinned Virgin was emblazoned on the cape of the Indian, and the bishop immediately fell to his knees.

Today, the image of the Virgin de Guadalupe can be found perched above the rear view window of nearly every bus and on the street cart of nearly every taco vendor in Mexico City. She has transcended strict religious association and become a lasting symbol of a new fusion of European religion and indigenous culture, a fusion which has changed both the

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In both political parties, the demographic shift is altering the state's political landscape.

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The story serves as an instructive parable for the current cultural transformation currently afoot in California. North is blending with South to create something new. That blending will fundamentally change what it means to be Californian and a California Latino, and there will be increasing overlap between the two identities. As we prepare to become a majority Latino state, Californians also must prepare for the culture change and fusion that will inevitably grow out of the continued blending of cultures. The cultural shift is entering advanced stages in places like Montebello, the San Fernando Valley,

Fresno and other pockets around the state, and slowly, the political change is beginning. On the Republican side, Lungren spent thousands of dollars on Latino outreach during his failed gubernatorial run. Earlier this year, knowing that California is crucial to his presidential aspirations, Vice President Al Gore chose a California visit to announce a proposal for millions of dollars for new federal welfare benefits for legal immigrants.

In both political parties, the demographic shift is altering the state's political landscape. A Latino lieutenant governor and 24 Latino representatives in the state Legislature from both political parties underscore this change, but the full force of the politi-

cal change has yet to be felt. The trend will only accelerate in the coming years, but it is still too early to fully predict how that change will manifest in terms of the framing of political issues and discourse.

As in the parable of Juan Diego and the Virgin, the Latino future in California is not simply a question of how the two political parties go about wooing the Latino vote, nor is it exclusively a question of how Latinos will change their political behavior as they continue to acculturate. Part of the question must also be how the Democratic and Republican parties, as well as other political institutions, will be transformed by the profound cultural change the demographic shift is causing, and whether this political realignment will be as radical as the cultural one. 

Comments on this story by Associate Editor Anthony York may be emailed to anthonyy@statenet.com or editor@statenet.com.

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JOURNAL

Gray Davis: Walking in Jimmy Carter's footsteps

When Gray Davis was elected governor in a landslide last November, Republicans fretted that Davis would become another invincible Bill Clinton — a moderate-talking Democrat quite willing to steal Republican issues and rhetoric when persuaded to do so by polling data. Since then, Davis' performance reminds one not so much of Clinton but of another "centrist" Democrat, the muddled and failed Jimmy Carter.

Consider the evidence. The press already has begun criticizing Davis' micromanaging style of governance. Newspaper accounts have pointed out Davis' tight personal control over press releases, his inability and unwillingness to delegate authority, his slowness in making key appointments and his gagging of cabinet officials.

Clinton has been criticized for many things, but micromanagement is not one of them. Jimmy Carter was another story. In his book, "With Reagan," Edwin Meese, former U.S. attorney general and longtime Reagan advisor, observed the following about Carter: It wasn't simply that knowing all about energy policy, the Middle East, or any other major issue was beyond the capacity of any single human, though that is certainly true. It was also that the attempt to absorb so much detail distracted the president from looking at the overall picture and establishing workable priorities."

Such failings can already be seen in Davis' governorship. For example, while he has made sure that all the i's are dotted and all the t's are crossed in his press releases, Davis has admitted that he has not thought deeply about his policy priorities outside of education. Indeed, Davis has said that he won't have his ideas "fleshed out" until the middle to latter part of this year. As one Capitol pundit has noted, "Not even Gray Davis knows what the governor's views are on many policy issues because he hasn't decided." This inability to articulate a larger policy vision is especially strange coming from a man who boasted during the campaign that, with his long resumé of lower state posts, he was the most well-prepared governor-in-waiting the state has ever had.

Davis' similarity to Carter reaches even the comical. Lyn Nofziger, another old Reaganite, noted that Carter "worried about who his senior staff hired as secretarial help." Aides acknowledge that Davis argues about which office secretary

should make that day's Federal Express run.

The ultimate problem with chief executive micromanagement is that administrations simply grind to a halt. In describing how this occurred under Carter, Meese noted that, "Hundreds of problems and thousands of details are involved in managing something as vast as the federal government." Compare Meese's observation of Carter with a *Sacramento Bee* report that warns that Davis' tendency to micromanage "could ultimately prove troublesome for an administration that collectively must make hundreds of decisions a day." Paralysis in the face of difficult policy challenges sank Carter, and it could sink Davis.

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Although Davis may indeed self-destruct over the next four years, it is unclear whether state Republicans end up profiting. An incumbent chief executive, even one with self-inflicted wounds, still enjoys all the advantages of incumbency. Carter, wounded as he was, was no push-over in 1980, and neither will be Gray Davis. Defeating an incumbent who can't see the forest for the trees requires an opponent with a larger vision to offer.

In 1980, Republicans had such a candidate in Ronald Reagan. In Meese's words: "Reagan, in contrast to Carter, was a big-picture man. Carter could tick off a list of inconsequential details about some aspect or other of federal policy, but seemed to have little idea where he wanted to lead the country. Reagan did not immerse himself in details, but he had a true vision of what he wanted to accomplish, and how the various components of his policy fit together."

Yet despite Reagan's successful example, more than a few Republicans want to narrow the party's focus back to old-style chamber-of-commerce Republicanism — the kind of corporate Republicanism that kept Republicans in the minority for decades. Republicans should remember that Reagan blended both economic and social conservatism into a coherent vision. That vision transformed the Republican Party into a winner. Regardless of how weak the opponent, without such an encompassing vision tailored to current problems, Republicans will be sentencing themselves to a long stay in the political wilderness. 🏠

by Lance
T. Izumi



Contributing Editor Lance T. Izumi is a senior fellow at the Pacific Research Institute. Comments may be e-mailed to editor@statenet.com.

Reuse, Recycle you can go

With term limits now a Darwinian certainty in the state Capitol comes the conservationist's dream: more reuse and recycling — of state lawmakers, that is. Increasingly, the trend is pointing more and more Capitol pols back home toward City Hall. Those who once climbed career ladders from municipal and county government up to the Statehouse are now beginning to spin the fabric of campaigns parachuting them right back into their old stomping grounds. And in many local races, the bull's eye is aimed at the mayor's seat. Four of California's major cities have upcoming mayoral races, and all four have a possible Capitol player. Here's an early peek at this rapidly evolving political landscape.

San Francisco, November 1999

In his previous incarnation, Willie Brown was the self-proclaimed Ayatollah of the Assembly. His 15-year-reign as Speaker was peppered with masterful procedural maneuvering and a concentration of power sure to be unmatched in the term limits era. In fact, many point to Brown's iron rule as the spark that lit the fire for term limits in 1990 in the first place.

In 1995, Brown left Sacramento to take on the mayoralship of San Francisco. In his first term, Brown saw his honeymoon go haywire as the volatile San Francisco electorate turned against what was perceived as personal arrogance and mismanagement of the city's Municipal Railway System.

A review of his first term is a good-news, bad-news scenario for *Da Mayor*, who is ramping up for his 1999 reelection bid. The bad news is that a recent *San Francisco Chronicle* poll showed only 30 percent of voters said they were likely to vote for Brown again. The good news: he still outpolled all presumptive opponents better than 3-1. So it goes in this tempestuous, insatiable city.

With arch-nemesis Quentin Kopp receiving a midnight judicial appointment by Governor Pete Wilson to the San Mateo County bench, Brown's primary, and perhaps only, rival is political consultant Clint Reilly, who has vowed to pour \$2 million of his own money into the race. Reilly is best known in Sacramento for advising Kathleen Brown in her 1994 run against Wilson, and watching a double-digit lead turn into a Wilson landslide. Former

Mayor Frank Jordan is also mulling a possible comeback.

Other possible contenders, namely popular Board of Supervisors President Tom Amiano, have decided to take a pass this time around in what may be the final political campaign of Brown's 35-year storied career in public office.

San Diego, November 2000

The mayoral race in this coastal city is colored in part by the Washington political scene, as Democratic leaders persuade San Diego Representative Bob Filner, a liberal Democrat, to pass on running for mayor and seek reelection instead. This clears a way for state Senator Steve Peace, a moderate Democrat, who chairs the powerful Senate Budget Committee, to throw his hat into the ring. Peace seemed to get some public encouragement from Wilson, himself a former San Diego mayor, in an article in the *San Diego Union Tribune* late last year. "He's bright, he's energetic, he's imaginative," the former governor told the paper. "He has passed interesting legislation in a broad variety of areas, including water policy. He's a real hardliner on crime."

Others said to be mulling a run are Republicans Peter Davis, a prominent banker, and Judge Richard Murphy, a former San Diego City Council member.

Other leading Democratic contenders include City Council members Juan Vargas, George Stevens and Christine Kehoe, who narrowly lost a congressional bid last fall.

Fresno, November 2000

Early on, political powerhouse Cruz Bustamante was thought to be interested in the mayor's seat in this Central Valley town. But that speculation was dashed, of course, by his election as Lieutenant Governor.

Now, with state Senator Jim Costa (D-Fresno) facing term limits in 2002, his name is being bandied about as a possible candidate for this Central Valley executive position. Democrats and Republicans alike have been privately urging Costa to run, while the city's five council members all remain on the fence, waiting for Costa to make his move. But there is increasing speculation that Costa will forego the race, namely because of the chain reaction his departure would set off in the Central Valley, where Democrats have often run into trouble at the polls. Freshmen Assemblymembers Dean Florez (D-Shafter) and Sarah Reyes (D-Fresno) both won expensive races last fall,

So you see, home again

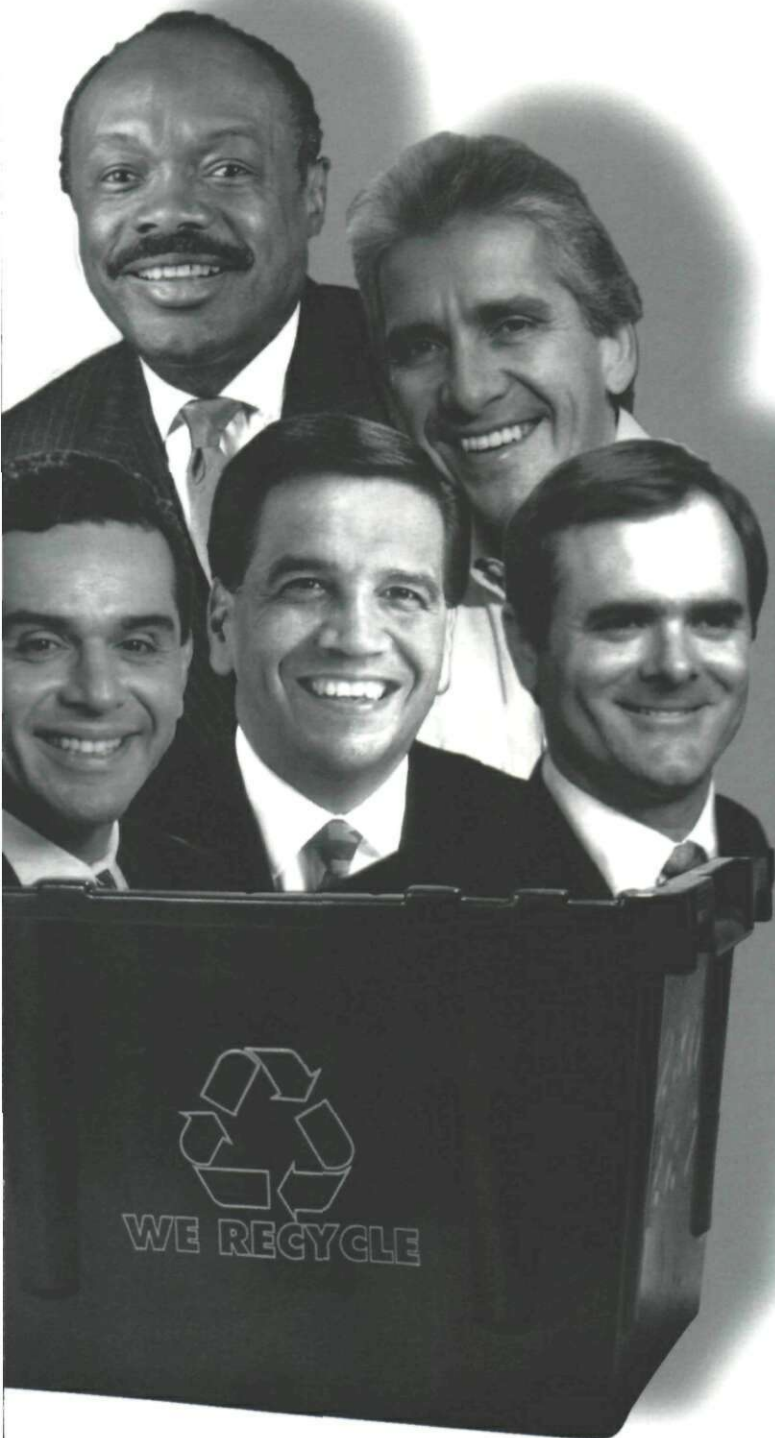
By Anthony York

and at least one of them would likely run for Costa's Senate seat if he were elected mayor. The race would be a tough one, especially considering it would be a special election, which tends to attract a more conservative group of voters than general elections. But Costa is allowing himself to be lobbied, seemingly charmed by the idea that the city's top spot appears to be his if he wants it.

Los Angeles, April 2001

It may still be two years away, but the mayor's contest here already is one of the most talked-about local races around the Capitol. In an attempt to learn from the failed 1993 mayoral candidacy of then-Assemblyman Richard Katz, Assembly Speaker Antonio Villaraigosa has been laying the groundwork for a 2001 mayoral run, fully aware of the perils of running a local campaign from Sacramento. He has beefed up the Los Angeles Speaker's Office of Member Services, sent top aide Rich Milner down to the Los Angeles office, and hired Elena Stern, a former spokesperson for the Al Checchi campaign, to run media relations out of Los Angeles. With Latino registration on the rise, and with his ever-increasing name recognition, Villaraigosa would immediately be a major player in what will surely be a crowded field. Villaraigosa may not even be the only major Latino figure in the race. Representative Xavier Bacerra is said to be testing the waters for a possible crack at the job. Other names mentioned are Los Angeles County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, a strong political force who toyed with runs in 1989 and 1993, and City Attorney Jimmy Hahn, scion to one of Los Angeles' best-known political families, who is all but sure to enter the fray. City Council members Joel Wachs and Roberta Chick and Republican developer Steve Sobaroff have also been mentioned. Even travel agent turned lieutenant governor candidate Noel Irwin-Hentschel's name has been floated as a possible contender. With such a colorful cast of characters, the Los Angeles mayor's race is sure to be a political spectacle to behold. 🏛️

Anthony York is an associate editor of the California Journal. Comments about this article may be e-mailed c/o editor@statenet.com.



What's next for Mr. Rogan?

by Susan Rasky



Revenge-minded Democrats savoring the prospect of going after U.S. Representative James Rogan in next year's congressional elections and starry-eyed Republicans urging their new hero to run for U.S. Senate against Dianne Feinstein might do well to remember that old saw about being careful what you wish for. It could come true.

Rogan, a bright, engaging conservative from a marginal district that includes Burbank, Glendale, Pasadena, South Pasadena and San Marino would have been an obvious congressional target even if he hadn't been one of the 13 House impeachment managers in the Senate trial of President Bill Clinton. The district's registration has been trending Democratic since the 1992 reapportionment, and its two nested assembly districts belong to Democrats. Rogan won his 1998 election with a scant 51 percent of the vote, which was actually an improvement over his margin in 1996.

But absent *l'affaire Lewinsky* and the national stage it provided for Rogan's prosecutorial talents, state Democratic leaders might have taken the long-term view and wagered that letting Rogan eke out one more narrow victory in 2000 was the better part of wisdom. With reapportionment on the horizon, a few nips and tucks in the 27th District could easily put Rogan out of a job in 2002 and deliver the seat to a Democrat.

More important, at least from the perspective of Democratic map-makers, leaving the 27th in the hands of a Republican for another two years would provide the opportunity to collapse the district entirely in 2002 and rearrange its pieces to carve a new seat for a Democratic Latino. That kind of strategic carving, tricky when an incumbent of either party holds the seat, is generally easier when the intended carcass belongs to the opposition party.

Leaving Rogan's district to the tender mercies of partisan reapportionment would be useful to Democrats in other ways. As veteran GOP strategist Tony Quinn is fond of observing, the rapidly changing demographics of the Los Angeles area promise to play havoc with the districts of seven other Anglo congressmen: Republicans David Dreier, Steve Horn, Gary Miller and Steve Kuykendall and Democrats Howard Berman, Henry Waxman and Brad Sherman.

Collapsing Rogan's seat would help relieve

some of the pressure to accommodate Latino political aspirations in districts now occupied by Berman, Waxman and Sherman. But if Rogan's seat goes to a Democrat in 2000, Democratic leaders will have one more of their own to worry about in the reapportionment shuffle. No doubt some of this has informed the thinking of state Senator Adam Schiff and Assemblyman Jack Scott, the two so-far-reluctant Democrats being urged to take on Rogan in the 2000 congressional race.

From the Republican perspective, patience about Rogan's political future might be the better part of wisdom. While the state party convention featured seven presidential candidates literally tripping over each other for attention, the February gathering of GOP faithful in Sacramento was most noteworthy for the absence of up and comers for statewide races in 2002 and beyond. Rogan, fresh from the Washington impeachment wars, looks awfully attractive against that backdrop and has said he is seriously considering a U.S. Senate run in 2000.

More pragmatic Rogan admirers warn that he is in no position to raise the \$10 million to \$15 million

necessary to contemplate a serious Senate campaign in this state and that the challenge to Feinstein would be a suicide mission. Defeat in 2000, they argue, would make Rogan damaged goods should he contemplate a run for statewide office in 2002. According to this logic, the smarter move for the 41-year-old congressman would be to wage a high-profile battle to keep his demographically doomed House district for another two years. Were he to succeed — and there are Democratic strategists who believe he could — he would enter the 2002 election season from a position of strength as a candidate who triumphed over partisan odds.

Making Rogan the excuse for a stale battle over impeachment may be attractive for national Democrats who are desperate to take back the House of Representatives next year and for state Republicans who are desperate for a U.S. Senate candidate. In the long run, however, it's a political waste for both parties. 🏛️

Contributing Editor Susan Rasky teaches journalism at the University of California, Berkeley. Comments on her column may be e-mailed c/o editor@statenet.com.

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DiFi as Veep?

Those who think Dianne Feinstein is a perfect match for Al Gore on the Democratic ticket should think back to an event late in the 1994 Senate campaign. It was a Saturday night, and President Bill Clinton was in San Francisco at the Fairmont Hotel, extolling Feinstein's virtues and raising money for her re-election. Feinstein was not there. She was in Washington to vote against Clinton's top legislative priority — the North American Free Trade Agreement.

It is that quality — some call it independence, others call it egoism — that lead some to believe that Feinstein will not be offered, nor would she accept, the vice presidential nomination. Feinstein has never been regarded, to put it mildly, as someone easy to work with or a team player. She gets along well with her fellow senators — both Democrats and Republicans. But she is absolutely tenacious in standing up for what she believes in — whether her opponents are the National Rifle Association or her own party's leaders.

"She doesn't have a number-two personality," said an old Feinstein hand.

Even if the job were offered, several of her associates believe she would have trouble accepting. Feinstein is running for re-election to the Senate in 2000, and while she technically could run for both offices simultaneously, it would be awkward, at best.

Then there is the indelicate matter of her age. The only reason Feinstein would accept number two is so that she might someday become number one, her loyalists say. Feinstein, 65, is not too old for the post — now. But if Gore were to serve for two terms, he would remain president until Feinstein was 75. For those reasons, those closest to Feinstein do not take the possibility too seriously. But their doubts have done nothing to slow the Feinstein-for-vice-president bandwagon.

Feinstein's credentials look so good on paper, that *Parade* magazine put her on the cover as one of five women most likely to become president by the year 2008.

"A woman with U.S. Senate and big city mayoral experience who happens to be from the nation's largest state. Wow!" writes Ron Faucheux, editor and publisher of *Campaigns & Elections*.

Washingtonian magazine calls a Gore/Feinstein ticket "the closest thing the party can find to a Hollywood Dream Team."

It's easy to see why Feinstein is seen as such a strong choice. She represents a state with 54 electoral votes — 20 percent of the total needed to

win the presidency. She comes from the same ideological wing of the party as Gore (as well as Bill Bradley, should Gore stumble). She is tough on crime, pro-trade, strong on public education and is seen as a figure who can rise above the partisanship which is so out of favor these days.

And, with the exception of Hillary Clinton, she has emerged as the nation's most recognizable Democratic woman at precisely the time when demand for female candidates appears to far outstrip supply. Democrats don't want to talk about the dearth of women in prominent positions. But of the party's six female senators and 39 women representatives, none come close to matching Feinstein in stature or electability. Most are either unknown or too liberal for a national ticket. The field is so slim that there has been talk about Representative Nancy Pelosi (D-San Francisco) as a potential VP candidate, which is about as likely as Congress approving a grape boycott.

Whatever Feinstein's future holds, there can be no doubt that in the spring of 1999, California offers no hotter national politician. Pete Wilson's decision not to seek the White House leaves California without a horse in the race for only the second time since 1964. Gray Davis intrigues the beltway crowd, which is impressed by his victory last November if not his charisma or political future. Representatives Chris Cox and David Dreier are sometimes mentioned as Republican VP contenders, as is UC Regent Ward Connerly, but none are any more likely than Pelosi.

While others toss Feinstein's name around, it is not often discussed in her Washington office. Feinstein grimaces when reporters ask — which they do repeatedly. "When we talk politics, we talk about the re-election campaign," said Kam Kuwata, Feinstein's long time political aide who is working on her 2000 Senate bid. "It [the vice presidential matter] just doesn't come up."

Kuwata has heard the talk of how the party may call on her. How she has a chance to secure a place in history. But like the others who surround Feinstein, he shrugs it off as the musings of the obsessed political class.

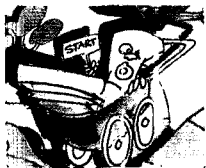
Yet, Kuwata is aware that predicting anything in politics is a fool's game. "The only thing I can tell you for sure about 2000 is that Dianne Feinstein will not be running the 100-meter dash at Olympics in Sydney," Kuwata said. 🏠

Contributing editor Marc Sandalow is Washington bureau chief for the San Francisco Chronicle.

by Marc
Sandalow



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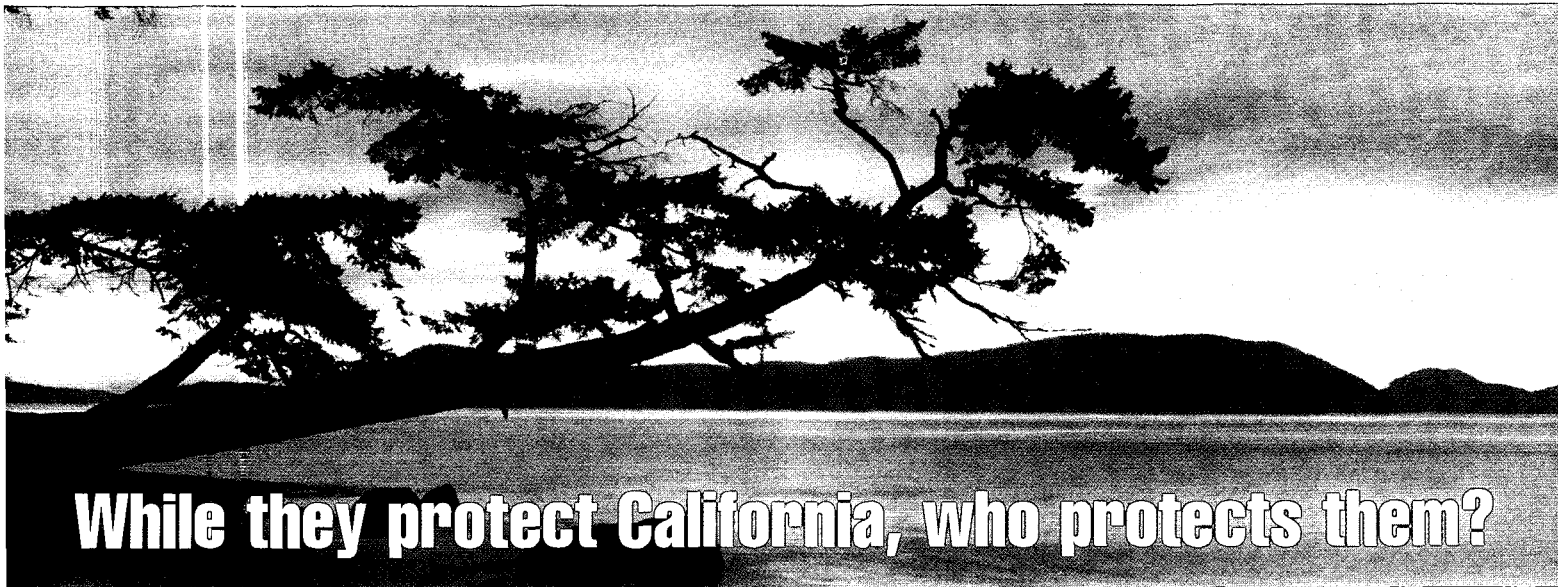
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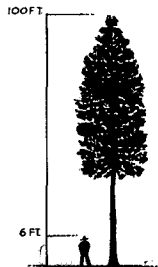
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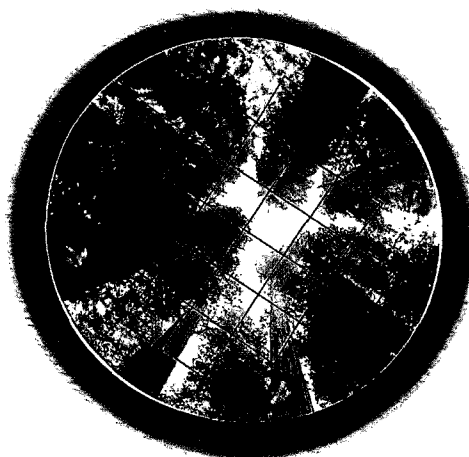
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